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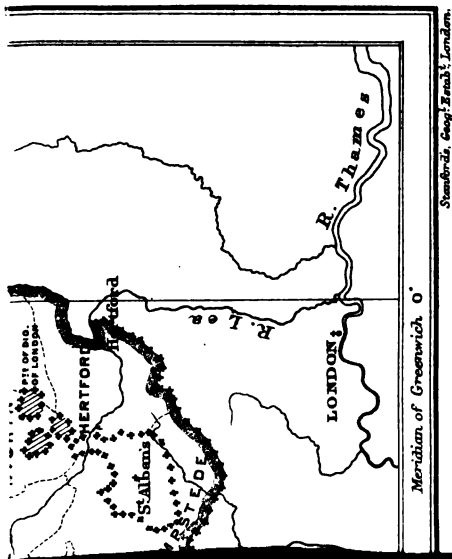
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DIOCESAN HISTORIES

①

L I N C O L N

BY THE LATE

EDMUND VENABLES, M.A.

CANON AND PRECENTOR OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

AND

Gresham
GEORGE G. PERRY, M.A.

ARCHDEACON OF STOW

WITH [✓]MAP

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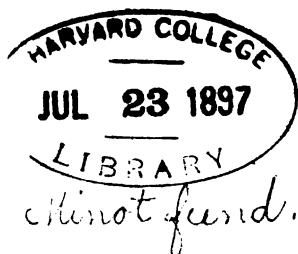
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PREFACE

THE "Diocesan History of Lincoln" was entrusted some years ago by the Society to the late Canon Venables. Having many literary tasks on hand, Canon Venables was not able to devote much time to this history, and during the years that the matter was in his hands it advanced no further than the end of the life of Bishop Robert de Chesney, A.D. 1167. After the Canon's lamented death the Society entrusted the completion of the work to me, and I have now performed it to the best of my ability. The portion written by Canon Venables has been very slightly abbreviated, but scarce any alterations have been made in his statements. For the latter portion of the work I am greatly indebted to the assistance of Canon Overton.

GEORGE G. PERRY.

WADDINGTON,
May 1896.

INTRODUCTION

THE diocese of Lincoln, as at present constituted, consists of the county of Lincoln, with which it is all but conterminous. The exceptions in defect and excess at the south-eastern and north-western extremities of the county are too insignificant to deserve specification. The present diocese is divided into two archdeaconries, that of Lincoln and that of Stow. These archdeaconries, from the time of the first formation of the see almost to the present time, were very unequal both in area and in number of benefices. The Archdeaconry of Stow, which in the opinion of Bishop Stubbs with great probability represented the ancient diocese of Lindsey or Sidnacester, was much the smaller. It comprised only four deaneries, lying at the north-western extremity of the county, between the Humber, the Trent, and the Ancholme, and extending to the city of Lincoln on the south, containing about 92 benefices, and a few chapelries. That of Lincoln comprised 22 deaneries, containing no fewer than 519 benefices, and many chapelries. This enormous disproportion was redressed, and the duties

of the two archdeacons substantially equalized by two Orders of Council issued in 1876 and 1877, by which twelve deaneries were transferred from the Archdeaconry of Lincoln to that of Stow. By this arrangement of the 560 benefices in the present diocese, 285 are under the jurisdiction of the Archdeacon of Lincoln, and 275 under that of the Archdeacon of Stow.¹ Several of the more extensive deaneries have been divided, and according to present arrangements there are now 40 deaneries or subdivisions of deaneries, each with its rural dean and decanal chapter. The office of rural dean, which had been long in abeyance, was revived during the wise and practical episcopate of Bishop Kaye (1827—1853). Each rural deanery has its own inspector of schools, under an inspector-in-chief.

The diocese of Lincoln stands third of the English and Welsh dioceses in acreage, being only exceeded by those of St. Davids and Norwich. Its superficial area is estimated at 1,767,879 statute acres, or about 2775 square miles. In population, however, it takes a much lower place, standing twenty-sixth of the thirty-four dioceses of the English Church. According to the census of 1891, the population was 472,778, and the number of inhabited houses 103,617. In the ninety years since 1801, the population has steadily grown, showing in that period an increase of little over 125 per cent.—*i. e.* it has more than doubled. Of the 560 benefices, many of which from the smallness both of income and population are held in plurality, more

¹ Return made to Convocation, 1896. Consolidated benefices are counted as one.

than 500 are provided with parsonages. The number of clergy actually at work is returned as 702.

The present diocese of Lincoln is but a small fragment of the præ-conquestal diocese, the seat of which was transferred by Remigius, the first Norman bishop, from Dorchester-on-Thames to Lincoln, *c.* 1072. As thus constituted, the diocese embraced the whole of the eastern portion of the great Mercian kingdom, bounded by East Anglia and Essex to the east, and by the Mercian shires of Warwick, Stafford, Derby, and Nottingham to the west. It stretched all across mid-England, from the Humber to the Thames, a distance of more than 200 miles from north to south, and included within its wide-spreading limits no fewer than ten modern counties, those of Lincoln, Leicester, Northampton, Rutland, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Bedford, Hertford, Buckingham, and Oxford. The process of breaking up this large diocese and reducing it to its present limits, has been a very gradual one. The first diminution, by the establishment of the see of Ely, took place in 1108, not very long after the transference of the see to Lincoln, under Robert Bloet, Remigius's successor. It was done ostensibly to relieve the bishop of a portion of his unwieldy charge, but more truly to gratify the ambition of Hervey, who, having made his see of Bangor too hot to hold him, had been made administrator of the Abbey of Ely during the vacancy of the abbacy; and by his influence with Henry I., obtained the elevation of the abbacy into an episcopal see, with the county of Cambridge as its diocese. No further narrowing of the limits of the diocese occurred till the period

of the Reformation, when, as a portion of the grand scheme of Henry VIII. for establishing new dioceses, so miserably maimed in execution, the diocese of Peterborough, comprising the counties of Northampton and Rutland, was founded in 1541, and the following year that of Oxford, with Oxfordshire as its diocese. Again there was a protracted halt in the subdivision of the still vast diocese, which, with the increase of population, became increasingly unmanageable. The formation of the diocese of Peterborough had also added largely to the difficulty of efficient episcopal superintendence, by cutting the diocese in two, and interposing a block between what in the maps appended to the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, as published by the recent Commission, is called the "Pars Borealis," including the counties of Lincoln and Leicester, and the "Pars Australis," comprising the remaining three. That he might occupy a more central position, and be within easier reach of the House of Lords, the bishop's residence was permanently fixed at Buckden in Huntingdonshire; and Lincoln, where his palace had been ruined in the Great Rebellion and never adequately restored, saw but little of him.

Thus in 1837 the diocese of Lincoln consisted of the whole of the counties of Lincoln, Leicester, Huntingdon, Bedford, and Buckingham, together with the better half of Hertfordshire and portions of Rutland, Oxfordshire, and Northamptonshire—the archbishop's peculiars and a few other peculiar jurisdictions being excepted. In 1837 the scheme of the first Ecclesiastical Commission for the rearrangement of dioceses and the equalization of episcopal incomes began to

take effect. By Order of Council, dated April 19 in that year, the archdeaconry and county of Bedford, and as much of the archdeaconry of Huntingdon as was included in the diocese of Lincoln, was transferred to that of Ely. On July 19, the archdeaconry and county of Buckingham was transferred to the see of Oxford, and on August 21 the archdeaconry and county of Leicester was made a portion of the diocese of Peterborough. Of the old historic diocese of Lincoln, therefore, only the county of Lincoln, with its two archdeaconries, was left under the rule of the bishops of that see. But as a set-off against the relief afforded to the bishop by the subtraction of five counties from his diocese, the same Order of Council which removed Leicester to Peterborough, transferred to Lincoln the county of Nottingham, with the exception of the deanery of Southwell, which from the earliest ages of the English Church had formed part of the diocese of York. The causes which had led to the exception of the Southwell deanery having ceased to exist, that portion of the county was added on June 4, 1844. The diocese thus remodelled was held by Bishop Kaye during the closing years of his episcopate, by Bishop Jackson during the whole period of his rule (1853—1869), and by Bishop Wordsworth till 1884, when the recently formed union was again severed, and Nottinghamshire was combined with Derbyshire to form the newly created diocese of Southwell. A preparatory step toward this separation had been previously taken by Bishop Wordsworth in the revival of the office of Bishop Suffragan, which, though duly

authorized by Act of Parliament,¹ had fallen into abeyance since the Reformation. The sanction of the Crown having been granted, the Rev. Henry Mackenzie, Archdeacon of Nottingham and Sub-dean of Lincoln, was consecrated Suffragan-Bishop of Nottingham at St. Mary's, Nottingham, February 2, 1870, and on his resignation from advancing age in 1877, the Rev. Edward Trollope, Archdeacon of Stow, was consecrated his successor under the same title.

¹ Act of 26 Henry VIII., ch. 14.

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LINCOLN

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHURCH IN LINCOLNSHIRE

THE origin of the Church in Lincolnshire, as in England generally, is shrouded in impenetrable darkness. In the words of Dr. Bright, "The question where was the Christian Faith first preached in Britain, is one which it is impossible not to ask, but which it is also impossible to answer. Answers no doubt have been suggested with more or less of definiteness and confidence ; but they appear to possess no trustworthy foundation." We may safely pass by all attempts to discover an apostolic foundation for the British Church, as savouring more of insular vanity than of historic probability ; but there is no reasonable ground for doubt that "some Christians did cross the Channel to our shores during the second century, if not earlier," and scattered the seeds of the faith over the soil of our island, planting Christian settlements here and there amongst its inhabitants. These settle-

ments would necessarily be generally limited to the cities and towns of Roman Britain, the country people remaining according to the literal meaning of their name *pagani*—pagans. That these sporadic Christian communities were gradually welded together in a National Church, and that this Church was a duly organized member of the Catholic Church throughout the world, with a threefold ministry, is placed beyond all doubt by the fact that when in 314 A.D. the great Council of Arles was summoned to heal the troubles caused by the Donatist schism, among the bishops summoned were three from Britain, attended by a presbyter and a deacon. The names of these three bishops were Eborius of York, Resitutus of London, and Adelphius “de civitate Colonizæ *Londinensium*.” This last designation has been held by many leading authorities to be a mistake of the Roman scribe, unfamiliar with the names of British cities; for “*Colonia Lindensium*,” and to point to a bishop of Lincoln—the old “*Lindum Colonia*”—existing at that early period of the Church’s history. But without further documentary evidence, which, now that the archives of the Vatican are thrown open, it is by no means impossible may be brought to light, the question is one which must remain open. That there is some mistake is certain. It is incredible that London could have sent two bishops to the Synod. Some other word must be substituted for “*Londinensium*”; either *Legionensium*, and that Adelphius’ see was the famous city of Caerleon-on-Usk, the “Camp of the Legions” in South Wales; or, as I have said, that we should read “*Lindensium*,” and place him at Lincoln, which we

know to have been "a colony," while we have no evidence that Caerleon was.

Passing beyond Lincoln itself, we have no evidence of the existence of a Christian Church in any part of Lincolnshire in Roman times, or those immediately subsequent to them. The Roman British Church was evidently a Church of limited extent, and apparently of narrow means. It seems to have been confined to Roman settlements, and to have drawn its converts from Roman colonists, or from Romanized natives, and to have struck but feeble roots in the soil. It was like many a Church now-a-days, a struggling Missionary Church, "scanty in numbers, and poor in wealth."

With the early part of the seventh century, we pass from the cloudland of conjecture to the solid ground of historic fact. In St. Paulinus, the founder of the Christian Church in Northumbria, Bishop of York, and afterwards Bishop of Rochester, our county recognizes its first recorded Evangelist. Paulinus, who, according to Alcuin, was a citizen of Rome, and an inmate of the famous monastery of St. Andrew on the Cœlian Hill, had been despatched with three others by Gregory to strengthen the Kentish mission in 601; and five-and-twenty years afterwards, A.D. 625, on the marriage of Edwin the King of Northumbria, still a pagan, to Ethelburga the daughter of Eadbald, King of Kent, and granddaughter of Augustine's royal convert, Ethelbert, was sent by Augustine as the chaplain and spiritual adviser of the princess, having previously, as the first step towards carrying out Gregory's desire that York should be erected into a second metropolitan

see, received episcopal consecration from Augustine. After two years of patient waiting for the fulfilment of the long-deferred hope, it will be remembered that Edwin became a convert to Christianity, and accepted baptism at Paulinus' hands, where the magnificent fabric of York Minster now rears its stately bulk, on Easter Day, 627 ; together with many of his nobles and members of his family. Edwin established Paulinus as bishop of his dominions—sees being then conterminous with kingdoms—to the evangelization of which he at once strenuously devoted himself. But not content with proclaiming the faith of Christ to the heathen of Deira, this true example of a missionary bishop turned his compassionate thoughts to the idolaters to the south of the Humber. Travelling probably by the Roman road, which runs from Eboracum (York) to Donum (Doncaster), and crossing the Trent at Segelocum (Littleborough), from whence the road runs along Felbridge Lane and joins the Ermine Street to the north of Lincoln, entering Lindum Colonia by the still standing Newport Gate, Paulinus preached, as Bede tells us,¹ in the old Roman hill-town, then occupied, after a longer or shorter period of desertion and ruin, by the Angle settlers, and that so effectually that its reeve or "prefect," as Bede calls him—Blæcca by name—"the pale-faced one"—became a convert, and was baptized "with all his house," and proving his faith by his works, built a "stone church of noble workmanship," when the churches generally were commonly of the humblest materials—of turf, or of wood and clay, mere huts of "wattle and daub." Of this, the first

¹ Bede, *H. E.*, vol. ii., p. 16.

Christian Church in Lindsey, the building having been probably burnt in some heathen inroad, the roofless ruins were still standing in Bede's time, and proved their sacred character by the miraculous cures of those who sought them in faith. Blacca's church is now probably represented by that of St. Paul's-in-the-Bail—a corrupted form of St. Paulinus, churches being then called after their founders, and not placed under any special invocation—which has parallels in Wales and Cornwall and Brittany. It was here that was consecrated, on the death of Archbishop Justus, his successor Honorius, by the sole ministry of Paulinus, the only English bishop.

This was not the only occasion when Paulinus visited Lindsey as a missionary. At some period during his episcopate—Bede does not specify the time—accompanied by his royal convert, Edwin, he appears on the banks of the Trent declaring the way of salvation to the crowds which gathered round him, and baptizing them in its waters. Bede describes the scene as it had been reported to him by one Deda, the Abbot of Partney, a cell of the abbey of Bardney, “a man of the utmost veracity,” who had heard the tale from an aged man, who had himself received baptism from Paulinus “at noon-day” on that occasion, and in a few vivid touches, adopted by Wordsworth, presents the great Italian missionary bishop before us.

“Of shoulders curved and stature tall,
Black hair and vivid eye and meagre cheek,
His prominent feature like an eagle's beak,
A man whose aspect doth at once appal,
And strike with reverence.”

The place of this multitudinous admission to the

Christian fold is fixed by Bede near the city, called in the English tongue "Tiovulfingceaster," the camp or stronghold of the clan of Tiovulf. This has been conjecturally identified with Southwell, which, however, does not stand on, nor in close proximity to, the Trent, and with Torksey, which, though now a small village, was an important town at the taking of the Domesday survey, with 263 burgesses in the time of Edward the Confessor, doing considerable trade with York. It may, perhaps, be more probably placed at Littleborough, a little above Gainsborough.

The next great name connected with the Church history of Lincolnshire is that of St. Chad, in whom we hail a welcome link with St. Aidan, the meek and sympathetic, but resolute and indefatigable, missionary bishop of the north, who deserves, with Augustine, to be styled Apostle of England. It will be remembered that Chad, having reluctantly consented to be consecrated to the see of York, for which he "felt himself unworthy," after a three years' rule which Bede calls "sublime," at the bidding of Archbishop Theodore, who, at his visitation in 669, detected some irregularity which vitiated his consecration, gladly laid down his office and retired to the more congenial quiet of his monastery of Lestringham. But he was not allowed to stay there long. Wulfhere, the King of Mercia, or Mid-England, wanted a bishop for his kingdom. Theodore, who could not have failed to be impressed with the beautiful character of Chad, and his evangelistic fervour, suggested him for the office. Wulfhere gladly accepted the recommendation. The informality of his consecration having been corrected,

Chad in 664 entered on the spiritual charge of an unwieldy diocese, almost entirely heathen, embracing nineteen counties, and at least nine modern dioceses, of which Lincoln was one, placing his episcopal see at Lichfield, where the name Chadstow, near a holy well at the east end of the fort which menaces the spires of that most graceful of minsters, preserves the memory of this "holy and humble man of heart." In those early days, before the consolidation of the local kingdoms, for which the wise policy of Archbishop Theodore in welding together the separate provincial Churches into one Church of England formed the precedent, Lindsey, as the border-land between Northumbria and Mercia, owed a fluctuating allegiance to one or the other, according as its fortunes were in the ascendant. At this period it was under Mercian rule. From the days of Diuna, the Irish missionary, the first bishop of the Mercian sovereignty, who died 658 A.D., any episcopal superintendence Lindsey enjoyed was given by him or his successors. Of these, St. Chad was almost the last. Of his work in Lindsey we unhappily know nothing. All that is recorded in connection with Lincolnshire is that one of his missionary centres was at a place called "Ad Barvæ," or "at the grove," where his royal patron Wulfhere had given him fifty hides of land for the endowment of the bishopric, on which he had erected a religious house, where, in Bede's day, some traces of the regular monastic life established by him—"instituta ab ipso regularis vitæ vestigia"¹—were still to be found. One of Bede's editors identifies this with Barton-on-

¹ Bede, *H. E.*, vol. iv., p. 3.

Humber, others place it at Bardney, but the weight of authority leans to Barrow-on-Humber. On Chad's death, in 672, he was succeeded by Winfrid, Abbot of "Ad Barvæ." He was a disciple of Chad's, trained up by him in the discipline he had established at Barrow, and became his deacon. He is described by Bede as a "good and modest man." His tenure of the see was very short. At the Council of Hertford, in 673, he was deposed by Theodore for some "disobedience"—"per meritum cuiusdam inobedientiæ"¹—which is not explained, but is supposed to have been a refusal, like that of Wilfrid a little later, to acquiesce in Theodore's wisely designed but too autocratic plan for the subdivision of his huge diocese. Winfrid, not improbably glad to be relieved of the responsibility of such an episcopate, offered no resistance to Theodore's act of deposition, and meekly retired to the old monastery, in which he had passed his youth, where he ended his days "in all holy conversation."

The same year which witnessed the deposition of Winfrid, 673, brings before us the romantic tale of the flight of St. Etheldreda, or Audrey, which, transient as it was, has left a lasting memorial in Lindsey in the dedication of the church of West Halton in the north-west of the county, and in the noble minster of Stow.

Another name deservedly ranking high in English hagiology, with which the religious history of our county is connected, is that of Oswald, King of Northumbria, that most beautiful type of Christian kingship. Oshyth, the wife of Ethelred, King of

¹ Bede, *H. E.*, vol. iv., p. 6.

Mercia, who came to the throne in 675, was Oswald's niece, being the daughter of his brother and successor, Oswy. Both Oshyth and her husband were devoted Christians. The Abbey of Bardney, on the left bank of the Witham, was probably founded by them. The bodies of departed saints were regarded as the most-to-be-coveted treasures a religious house could possess. Oshyth desired to enrich Bardney with the relics of her royal uncle, who had died on the battle-field, fighting against the fierce old heathen, Penda, King of Mercia, Ethelred's father, a true martyr for the cause of Christ. The wain containing the sacred treasure arrived at the gates of the Abbey as night was falling. The monks refused to open the gates to the body of one who, saint as he was, had fallen in an endeavour to bring Lindsey under an alien yoke. Deaf to the expostulations of the Queen, they suffered the royal corpse to remain in the open air all night. A tent was spread over it by the attendants, to guard it from desecration. That night a sign was shown from heaven. A pillar of light stood over the wain, reaching to the sky, and seen far and wide. Nearly all Lindsey, Bede tells us, witnessed this marvellous attestation of Oswald's sanctity. The next morning the monks of Bardney, in contrition for their error, were as eager to receive the bones as they had been the previous night to exclude them.

The relics were received with all honour. They were reverently washed, and deposited in a shrine within the church, above which was hung a banner of purple and gold, betokening Oswald's twofold dignity as saint and king. According to the belief of the age,

miracles ratified Oswald's saintly dignity. The very water in which his bones had been washed, nay, even the earth on which it had been poured, was endued with curative power. The most acceptable gift Oshyth could bestow on Ethelhild, the Abbess of the cell at Skendleby, when visiting her at Bardney, was some of this hallowed dust, enclosed in a casket. This chapter of the early religious history of Lindsey ends mournfully. In 697, Oshyth was murdered by the nobles of Lindsey, who thus vented their implacable hatred for the royal house of Northumbria from which she had sprung, the kings of which had so often made the province the battle-field between them and the rival sovereigns of Mercia. Ethelred, saddened by the blow like so many members of the Anglo-Saxon royal houses, abdicated his throne, and, in the language of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, was "shorn a monk" in the Abbey of Bardney, of which he died Abbot in 716. The next century saw the overthrow of Bardney by the Icenues, in common with all the religious houses of Eastern England, and the sacred deposit was transferred to Gloucester, where it gave its name to the Abbey of St. Oswald.

A few years after the reception of Oswald's body, Bardney was the scene of the meeting of the truly great though impracticable Wilfrid—the star on whom "the most brilliant period of our early ecclesiastical history so worthily set"—on his triumphant return from his second visit to Rome in 704, and King Ethelred, then the Abbot of the house. The two old men, we are told by Wilfrid's biographer, Eddi, embraced and wept for joy. Ethelred prostrated himself before the

papal rescript, which was to be received far otherwise by Wilfrid's sovereign, Alfred of Northumbria.

The name of St. Botolph, still living among us in the great seaport of Boston (St. Botolph's Town), and stamped in larger characters on the other side of the Atlantic, strikingly evidences the continuity of history bridging over the centuries. Botolph was by birth an Englishman. Early in the seventh century, with his brother Adulph, he crossed the sea to Germany, to be more fully instructed in the Gospel they had received, from some unrecorded source. There they became monks, and Adulph, it is said, was eventually the first Bishop of Utrecht. Botolph passed into France, where, in the Abbey of Chales, near Paris, he took under his care the two sisters of Ethelmund, sub-king of the South Angles, who, according to the fashion of the day, had been sent thither for religious instruction, monasteries being then very rare in England. On his return, in 654, Ethelmund gratefully offered him an endowment from the royal demesnes for the foundation of a religious house. Rejecting all more attractive localities, Botolph chose a lonely spot deep in the marshes skirting the estuary of the Witham, named Ikanhoe, "the hill of oxen." There he built his monastery, where monks gathered round him, living under a rule compiled from old and new authorities. The fame of his piety and learning spread far and wide, attracting strangers from distant parts. Among these was Ceolfred, the active coadjutor of Benedict Biscop at Wearmouth, afterwards Abbot of Jarrow. Bede paid him a visit, *c.* 679, to profit by his experience for the government of his own monastic house.

A still more celebrated name is that of the royal youth, the Mercian Guthlac; that typical example of "a strange and intensely mediæval saintship," who in his early years baptized Christians, though he was true to what is said to be the meaning of his name, "Battle-sport." Fired with emulation of the ancient heroes of his house, he became, like David, "the captain of a fierce band, carrying fire and sword through the lands of his enemies"; but "even then restoring to the plundered a third part of the booty." "Nine years of this predatory life," writes Dr. Bright,¹ "suffices him. He begins to see what life and what death means. He thinks of the woeful end of mighty princes; estimates the vanity of earthly glory; trembles at the thought of the inevitable end." One morning, in 697, while still in the prime of his youth, only twenty-four years old, he takes farewell of his followers, and bids them find another leader. After two years in a monastery at the royal town of Repton, where he won all hearts by his "frank, modest, and affectionate discipline," in an all-mastering desire to serve God more perfectly than contact with mankind in any form allowed, he plunged into the deepest recesses of the trackless fens, where the sluggish waters of the Welland and the Nen soak their way to the Wash, and reared himself a hermitage on a spot of hard ground forming an islet in the midst of the dismal swamp, environed with dark forests. This was Crowland, properly "Cruland," "coenosa terra," afterwards the site of the great historic monastery, destined in after ages to become the mother

¹ *Lectures on Early English Church History*, p. 395.

of the University of Cambridge. Guthlac is recorded to have reached this dreary spot in the boat of one Tatwin, one of the few to whom the almost inaccessible spot was known, on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24, 699. There he remained for fifteen years, doing battle with fancied evil spirits, the creation of the delirium of marsh fever, and a life "of unnatural austerity, receiving crowds of visitors of all ranks." Abbots, monks, earls, the rich, the poor, the sick, the sorrowful, attracted "even from the remoter parts of Britain," by the fame of his piety and sympathetic wisdom, to unburden their hearts to him, and none being sent away without finding relief drawn from the Holy Scriptures, on which he based all his counsels. "Nothing," wrote his biographer Felix, "staid in his mind but charity, peace, pity, forgiveness. No one ever saw him angry, hurried, sorrowful; always cheerful himself, always helpful to other, with unwearied patience and keen discrimination." But such a life in such unwholesome surroundings was not destined to be a long one. He died, fifteen years after his first settlement in Crowland, April 11, 714, at the comparatively early age of forty-seven. To carry on the history of Crowland a little further, Ethelbald of Mercia, who came to the throne two years after Guthlac's death, and died himself in 757, is said to have built a stone monastery on the marshy islet, strengthening the treacherous foundations with piles of wood, as a token of gratitude for the counsel afforded him by the holy hermit in his early days of exile. The tale, however, though not improbable, rests on no undoubted authority. But

when and by whomsoever it was founded, it cannot be doubted that a monastery existed at Crowland at an early date, and that it almost certainly perished with its sister houses with Danish invasions, to revive again under one of the race of the destroyers, Turkytel by name, in the period shortly preceding the Norman Conquest.

Obscure as his memory has become, another holy man, St. Higbald, has stamped his name too permanently on the nomenclature of our county to be altogether passed over. Our knowledge of him is the slightest. Nothing more than that he was the abbot of a religious house somewhere in Lindsey, "a man," according to Bede, "of the greatest sanctity and continence"; that he was the tutor of Swidbert, the companion of Willibrod in his mission to the Frisians, and the friend of Egbert, the Irish monk who was the organizer of that mission. The name of the parish of Hibaldstow, near Brigg, *i. e.* the "stow" or dwelling-place of Higbald, indicates that it was his residence and chief mission station, while the dedication of the churches of Scawby and Manton in the immediate neighbourhood, and that of Ashby de la Laund near Sleaford, besides that of Hibaldstow itself, are a record of the missionary work of this almost unknown monk in rescuing Lincolnshire from paganism.

To pass to another branch of our subject. We can hardly have failed to observe that the whole of the early founders of the Christian Church in our county were members of a religious community—abbots or monks. This is in accordance with the law of evangelization in its early period. As Bishop Stubbs has

said,¹ "the conversion of England was accomplished principally if not entirely by monks either of the Roman or of the Irish school; and thus the monastic institution" in Britain "was coeval with Christianity itself; it was the herald of the Gospel to kings and people alike. . . . In the best of them the ascetic and missionary characters were happily blended. Their devout retirement was a means of gaining rest of body, mind, and spirit for new work. Every good missionary must be an ascetic; so for the first century of the conversion, every monastery was a mission station, and every mission station a monastery." From its sheltering walls the primitive evangelists—the Apostles of England, Augustine and Paulinus, Aidan and Cuthbert, Finan and Fursey, Chad and Cedd, Higbald and Berinus, and their companions went forth to carry the life-giving name to the pagans around them, and to its calm refuge they returned to "rehearse" to those at home "all that God had done with them," and in the common services and in secret communion with God, ask pardon for their mistakes, comfort for their failures, and obtain wisdom and strength for future work.

But a terrible time of trial was now to come upon these happy Christian settlements from the irruption of the fierce Danish invaders of the land. The reputed wealth of the abbeys and minsters, especially the great Fen houses of Crowland, Peterborough, and Ely, made them the special object of attack. The long estuary of the Humber, with its safe anchorage, gave the piratical hordes admission

¹ *Memorials of Richard I.*, vol. ii., pp. 13, 14.

to the interior, while the Trent and the Witham, already connected by the Roman canal of the Foss Dyke, carried their war-ships into the very heart of the county of Lincoln, which was swept with fire and sword. Probably not a single church was left unruined, or a single religious house unburnt and unpillaged. Bardney with its hundred monks was destroyed; the reddened masonry and molten lead at Stow, tell of its conflagration; Crowland was sacked and fired, while in each the monks and canons fled, or lay slaughtered among the smoking ruins.

We now pass from the early monastic history of Lincolnshire, *i. e.* the period of its evangelization, to its diocesan history, *i. e.* the period of its organization as a member of the great English Church. The great mediæval diocese of Lincoln was eventually formed by the combination of two ancient English sees, both within the limits of the kingdom of Mercia, and its bishop was the successor of two distinct episcopal lines, each dating from the seventh century. As we have already seen, the first episcopal head of the Lindisfari was the Missionary Bishop of Mercia, whose bishop's stool was in St. Chad's time established at Lichfield. About 678, the great organizing mind of Theodore, keenly alive to the evils inseparable from dioceses too wide for the personal superintendence of their bishop, with the assent of a Witenagemote, but unhappily without consulting its episcopal head, divided the huge Northumbrian diocese into four, and added as a separate diocese Lindsey, which had been lately wrested from Mercia, and was once more under Northumbrian rule. Saxulf, the Mercian Bishop of

Lichfield retired, and Eadhed, a former chaplain of King Oswy, who had accompanied Chad in his journey to the south for consecration, was consecrated at York by Theodore as Bishop of the Lindisfari, or "men of Lindsey," in 678. His tenure of the see was very short. The same year the victory of Ethelred over the Northumbrians reunited Lindsey to Mercia, and Eadhed was forced to seek safety in flight. He crossed the Humber into Yorkshire, where he became bishop of a new diocese carved out of York, with its bishop's stool at Ripon. The deserted bishopric was filled by Ethelwin, "of noble Anglian blood," "who had resorted to Ireland, the chief seat of learning of that age," for instruction in devout things, and had returned "well furnished." He was already connected with Lindsey, his brother Aldaris being Abbot of Partney. He was consecrated in 680 by Theodore, and fixed his see at Sidnacester as "Sydensis civitas." This, as we have already said, has been commonly identified with Stow-on-Lindsey, but without indisputable evidence. Camden records the common belief "in those parts that Stow was the Mother Church of Lincoln."¹ Ethelwin ruled the Church of Lindsey for many years with great splendour—Bede says "nobilissime"—and was succeeded by EADGAR, who is only known to us by his signatures to the foundation charter of Evesham in 706, and at the Council of Cloveshoo in 716. His successor was KINBERT or AGNIBERT, a contemporary of Bede, who died in 732, and was followed by ALWIG, consecrated by Tatwin of Canterbury in 733. He signed at

¹ Camden, *Britain*, vol. i., p. 572.

Cloveshoo in 747 as "episcopus Lindissæ provinciciæ," and died in 750. Then came EALDULF I. (750—765), a deacon of his predecessor, and CEOLWULF (767—796), in whose time was held the Council of Cealchyth in 787, which established the shortlived archbishopric of Lichfield, placing under it his own see with all those of Mercia. He (794) accompanied Eanbald, Bishop of London, "to foreign parts," probably to Rome, and seems to have died abroad. His successor was EALDULF II., consecrated in 796, present at the Council of Cloveshoo in 803, which abolished the Archbishopric of Lichfield; at Cealchyth in 816, signing as "Lindisfarorum episcopus," and again at Cloveshoo in 825. His last extant signature¹ is dated 836. He must have died soon after, for his successor BERHTRED was consecrated in 838. With Berhtred closes the list of the Bishops of Lindsey. He is named by William of Malmesbury "ultimus episcopus Lindisfarorum seu Sidnacestrensis."

The Danes were now, after the first period when simple plunder was their object with a speedy return to their ships, entering on the second period of their invasions, when not booty only but permanent settlement was their purpose. Eastern Mercia became their home; the land was parcelled out among them, the "*bys*," which are so plentiful in Lincolnshire, indicating the extent to which the heathen marauders after mastering the soil settled down as regular inhabitants. Christianity was to a large degree stamped out. When the churches had been burnt and pillaged, and their priests and people put to the

¹ Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus*, No. 237.

sword, there was no place for a Christian bishop in that which soon came to be known as the "Danelagh," i.e. the region where the Danish law was in force, of which Lincolnshire was a prominent part. This is the darkest period of English Early Church History. The Danish invasion was a Nemesis not wholly unmerited either by Church or nation. "The ninth century in England," writes Bishop Stubbs,¹ "until the reign of Alfred, is a blank as to learning, sanctity, or practical activity. Learning had reached the point at which, south of the Humber, as Alfred lamented, it was hard to find a man who could read Latin. Devout men spent their energies in pilgrimages to Rome rather than in doing their duty; and when the Danes came in force, they fell on an enervated and almost defenceless people." After Berhtred, an ominous gap of more than a century occurs in the episcopal annals of Lindsey. We do not hear again of Bishops of Lindsey till 952, when Leofwin signed conciliar acts under that title, as he did in 965. In 997 and 1004, Sigferth did the same. But the title was simply a survival. All real episcopal power had ceased long before, and the very name was soon to pass away. There had been a bishop's see at Leicester for nearly three centuries, ever since the partition of the wide Mercian diocese by Theodore in 679, and with occasional breaks the episcopal succession had been continued well into the tenth century. Coeval with Leicester, Lindsey was now to be merged in it. Florence of Worcester tells us that Leofwin united the two dioceses of Lindsey and Leicester into one, taking

¹ *Memorials of Richard I.*, Rolls Series, vol. ii., p. 18.

the oversight of both himself. But as the name of Lindsey had passed from the episcopal roll, so that of Leicester was to pass away. Scarcely had the union been effected, when the growing pressure of the Danes behind drove Leofwin to the old episcopal seat at Dorchester-on-Thames, where, more than two centuries before, Birinus, the apostle of Wessex, had set up his throne, subsequently transferred to Winchester. A new succession of bishops had arisen, unconnected with the original strain, or with allegiance to Mercia. The last of these had been Oskytel, who in 958 had been translated to York. Leofwin was his successor as head of the vast combined diocese, including within its limits ten counties, which, after the loss of Cambridgeshire on the formation of the diocese of Ely by Henry I., continued undiminished till the creation of Henry VIII.'s new diocese of Peterborough cut off Northampton and Rutland, and that of Oxford, Oxfordshire, and till quite recent times stretched from the Humber to the Thames.

The dates of the consecrations of Leofwin's successors, EADNOTH I. and ESCWY, are not recorded. ALFHELM next was consecrated in 1002, and his successor, EADNOTH II., who had previously been Abbot of Ramsey, in 1005. Eadnoth stands forth as a brave patriotic man. After the slaughter of Archbishop Alphege in the Danish drinking bout in 1012, he assisted Bishop Elfwin of London in giving his body honourable interment in St. Paul's. Four years later he perished himself fighting by his sovereign's side on the fatal field of Assandun. He was buried, not in his former monastery of Ramsey, but in the rival

minster of Ely, where miracles are said to have borne witness to his sanctity. His successor, **ETHELRIC** (1016—1034), also from Ramsey, is described as “a prudent and sagacious man,” who by his favour with Canute obtained many gifts and privileges for the abbey in which he was buried. **EADNOTH III.** (1034—1050) stands next on the list, known in contemporary records as the “good bishop of Dorchester.” He stood high in the favour of Canute and his sons, the former of whom may have aided him in his grand re-edification of the minster at Stow, left in ruins by the earlier ravages of the Danes, where his work may be distinctly traced on the arches of the lantern. He died at Dorchester in 1049.

The next bishop, **ULF** by name, a Norman by birth, proved a most unworthy successor. When appointed by Edward the Confessor, whose chaplain he had been, the whole nation cried shame on his utter unfitness for the episcopal station. The Chronicle writes, “King Eadward gave the bishopric to Ulf his priest, and right ill he bestowed it. For he did naught bishoplike therein, so it were shame to tell more of his doings.” So ignorant was he of the first essentials of even the priestly office, that at the Synod of Vercelli, whither he had gone for the papal confirmation of his appointment—a recent encroachment on the liberties of the English Church—his inability to perform the ordinary service all but caused his deposition. “They were very near breaking his staff,” the outward symbol of office—but then, as ever, bribery was all powerful at the Papal Court. He gave them “the larger treasures,” and kept his bishopric.

But his unworthy episcopate was short. On the triumphant return of Godwin and Harold from exile in 1053, when Edward's foreign favourites had to seek safety in flight, Ulf, in company with Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, equally unworthy of the high office into which the blind partiality of Edward had thrust him, "mounted and sword in hand cut their way through the streets, wounding and slaying as they went," and pushing through the East Gate of London, rode straight for Walton-on-the-Naze, where they found "a crazy ship" in which "they got them over sea." Ulf's bishopric was declared vacant by the Witan, and after nearly a year's delay, WULFWIG, Chancellor of the Confessor, whose name proclaims him an Englishman, was appointed in his room. A scruple not wholly unfounded as to the canonical character of Stigand's appointment to the primacy, led Wulfwig and Leofwin, the newly-appointed Bishop of Lichfield, to seek consecration beyond sea. During his episcopate, among the acts of boundless liberality to ecclesiastical foundations of Earl Leofric and his wife Godiva, were large gifts of land to the monastery of Stow, by which Wulfwig was enabled to carry out his design of founding there a college of priests, after the model of St. Paul's in London. After her husband's death, Godiva, for the repose of his soul, bestowed on the bishop and his successors, Newark and Fledborough and other manors. Wulfwig survived the Conquest little more than a year. He died on St. Nicholas' Day, October 6, 1067, and was buried in his own church at Dorchester, "the last of the long line of Prelates who had not despised that lowly dwelling-

place" ¹—the last of English blood for a century and a half to sit on the episcopal throne of Lindsey.

Before we pass from the pre-conquestal age, the revival of the monastic system, practically abolished by the Danish invasion, demands a few words. In this revival Lincolnshire had but a small share. Bishop Stubbs has told us that few of the religious houses destroyed by the Danes rose again from their ashes. Of those in Lincolnshire, the restoration of only two, CROWLAND and STOW—the refounding of Bardney was a century later—is recorded. After lying desolate for a century or more, Crowland was restored by Turkytel, a priest of the Danish royal family of East Anglia, a kinsman of Archbishop Oskytel of York. He had been Abbot of Bedford, but had been deposed by his convent, and had bought a canonry at St. Paul's. Though exalted by the pseudo-Ingulf into a saint and statesman of the first rank, he was a restless man of not too good a character; to him, however, the reconstruction of the abbey is due, the material very probably still wood. Passing to the time of Edward the Confessor, we find Crowland under the power of Earl Leofric, by whom it was bestowed on Ulfkytel, a monk of Peterborough. Ulfkytel, with the aid of Waltheof, the mighty Earl of Northampton, in 1061, began a stone church, the quarries of Bardney, given to the house by Waltheof, furnishing material of no ordinary excellence. The future fortunes of this great house belong to a later period. We have already described how Stow was rebuilt by Bishop Eadnoth, and its endowments

¹ Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. iv., p. 131.

augmented by Leofric and Godiva, on the eve of the Conquest. The only new religious house erected after the revival was that of SPALDING, founded by Harold in 1052, as a cell to Crowland, and subsequently given by Ivo Taillebois to St. Nicholas at Angers as an alien priory.

A word must be said as to the parochial division of the county. Of its history, here as elsewhere, we know nothing. The parochial system in England was the gradual and silent development of the leading principle of the Christian Church, as declared by our Lord Himself—"crescit occulto velut arbor ævo." The Gospel of Life was to be preached to all, and, as Bede reminded Egbert, this could only be effected by the multiplication of priests to preach, baptize, and administer the sacraments in each centre of population, "in singulis oculis." We learn from the same authority that country churches were multiplied, and provision of some sort made for the village clergy. Theodore, the true creator of the Church of England, is the traditional creator of the parochial system. His organizing mind saw clearly the advantages, nay, the necessity, of such a system, but, as Bishop Stubbs¹ says, it is unnecessary to suppose that he founded it, for "it needed no foundation"; "as the kingdom and shire were the natural sphere of the bishop, so was the township of the single priest; and the parish was but the township or cluster of townships to which the priest ministered." During the four centuries between Theodore and the taking of the Domesday Survey—a period, let it be remembered

¹ *Const. Hist.*, vol. i., p. 227.

as long as that which separates us from the reign of Henry VII.—the whole area of Lincolnshire was parcelled out into parishes, some larger, some smaller, each with its church, and parish priest ministering to his flock. The purpose of the Domesday Survey did not necessarily include a return of the parish churches. Any argument, therefore, as to their number in a certain district, drawn from its returns, must be precarious. We may, however, be sure of this, that the numbers in no case fall short of that given; that when a church was mentioned, that church was in existence. When Sir Henry Ellis, therefore, in his *Introduction to Domesday*, estimates the number of churches in Lincolnshire at that time as 222, we may be sure that he does not overshoot the mark. If the map given in the late Archdeacon Churton's *Early English Church* is to be relied on—unfortunately he does not say on what authorities it is based—there were 200 churches, equally distributed over the county, exclusive of Lincoln and Sleaford, which each had many churches. When we consider that the present number of separate benefices is only 548, only between two and three-times greater, and that the population has increased beyond all powers of estimation, and that these early churches were, as a rule, built and endowed by the individual landowners, we may see much to emulate and to copy in the religious zeal of what we are pleased to regard as the dark ages.

Of these pre-conquestal churches there are considerable structural remains. Indeed few counties are richer in what is called "Saxon work" than

Lincolnshire. The "long-and-short work," which is its leading characteristic, appears at St. Peter-at-Gowts in Lincoln, Bracebridge, Branston, Cranwell, Little Bytham, Ripsley, and others. There is also a considerable number of western towers, of the tall, unbuttressed form, with mid-wall shafts to the belfry windows, which belong to the pre-Norman style, though some of them may very probably have been built after the Conquest. Besides the towers of St. Mary-le-Wigford and St. Peter-at-Gowts, and St. Benedict's (reconstructed) at Lincoln—the two first-named of which Mr. Freeman erroneously identified with the churches recorded in Domesday to have been built by Colswegen after the Conquest, which were situated on the north bank of the Witham—these towers fall into three chief groups, one near Grimsby, a second near Caistor, and a third near Gainsborough, besides several scattered about the country. Of these, Barton-on-Humber is the largest and most noteworthy as a typical example of the style.

CHAPTER II

THE FOUNDATION OF THE SEE, AND ITS FIRST BISHOP

THE diocese of Lincoln furnishes a striking example of the general elevation of the character of the episcopate, and the healthy growth of ecclesiastical administration which the stern but wise and practically beneficial rule of William the Norman brought about. The first English see vacated by death after the Conquest was that of Dorchester. Wulfwig, the successor of the greedy and tyrannical Ulf, died in the following year, 1067. William lost no time in filling the see with a Norman ecclesiastic, Remy or Remigius by name, who had already established a claim on the Conqueror's gratitude by material aid towards his great enterprise. When, in the summer of 1066, William was building his ships and forming his invading fleet, among the great barons and prelates of Normandy who were offering their contingents of 50, 60, or 120 ships, Remigius, then almoner of the monastery of Fécamp,¹ was one of those of less degree who made

¹ The monastery of Fécamp stood high in William's esteem. It was there he kept his great Easter Feast to celebrate his conquest, 8th April, 1067.

their humbler offerings. His gift was a single ship, manned by twenty fighting men. It was, as we shall see, in after days brought as a charge against Remigius before the pope, that a promise either direct or implied had been given by William that a rich benefice, or even a bishopric in England, should be the reward of his loyalty, provided the conquest of the country was effected. Such a bargain is asserted by William of Malmesbury to have been struck—"episcopatum si vinceret pactus"—while Eadmer and other later writers more bluntly charge him with having "bought" the see by his gift of the ship and crew, and other costly services rendered to William.¹ In this he sailed himself from Saint Valery, and landing at Pevensey, promoted the fortunes of the day, if not with his weapons, which may well have been, yet certainly by his prayers and exhortations the night before. If Remigius returned, after the victory, to his monastery, he would be at hand when William kept his great Easter Feast at Fécamp, attended by his knights and soldiers, in 1067, to remind the Conqueror of the compact. Anyhow, he had not long to wait. On the 6th of December of the year, St. Nicholas' Day, Wulfwig, Bishop of Dorchester, died. Remigius was appointed to the vacant see, and received consecration at the hands of Stigand,

¹ *De Gestis Pontificum*, p. 312. His earlier words are even stronger, "divinum munus bellicosus laboribus nundinatus"—*ib.*, p. 66. Eadmer, *Hist. Nov.*, p. 7. (Ed. Selden.) "Remigius calumniatus est . . . quod pacta conventionione illum [pontificatum] a Willielmo post Rege facto *emerit*, officio videlicet quo ei in excidium Angliæ proferenti multifaria contentione et multiplicibus impensis deservierat."

the usurping archbishop, not yet deposed from his office, but whose uncanonical position had been solemnly declared by the Church of Rome, and made profession to him as his lawful Metropolitan. This proceeding, though unwittingly entered into on his part, was made the ground of another charge against him on his visit to Rome. It is hard to believe that Stigand's uncanonical position, which had led English bishops during his primacy to seek consecration abroad, was so inadequately grasped by Remy as the somewhat hasty words of his profession to Lanfranc imply—"nec ex toto ignarus nec usque quaque gnarus ordinandus ad cum veni"—certainly it could not be unknown to William.¹

The personal appearance of Remy is very distinct to us. Henry of Huntingdon and William of Malmesbury almost enable us to see him. Diminutive in stature, dark in complexion, "nature seemed to have formed him to show that the richest intellect might reside in the most wretched body." But, writes Henry of Huntingdon, "though small of stature, he was great in heart; though swarthy of hue, he was fair in his works." The stately minster of Lincoln, even though but little of his actual work remains, and the efficient organization of his enormous diocese, show the manner of the man, and, though perhaps he does not appear to have taken any leading part in matters of state, will ever give Remigius of Fécamp a high place among the early mediæval prelates of our country.

Remigius, still styling himself bishop of the insignifi-

¹ Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. iv., p. 133. Giraldus Cambrensis, vol. vii., p. 152.

cant Dorchester, as well as of Lincoln, was one of the nine prelates who laid consecrating hands on Lanfranc, August 29, 1070. The consecration of Thomas of Bayeux, who had been already nominated to the Archbishopric of York, which had been postponed that it might be confirmed by a brother metropolitan, speedily took place. Both metropolitans the next year repaired to Rome to receive their palls. They were accompanied by Remigius, who—a proof of the growing recognition of Roman supremacy—sought the confirmation of his appointment, the validity of which his enemies were not slow to question on simoniacal grounds, from an authority from whose decision there could be no appeal. The consecration of Thomas was also open to objection, on the ground of his being the son of a priest. The pope, Alexander II., was at first disposed to deprive both Thomas and Remigius of their bishoprics, as violators of canon law. They were temporarily deprived of their livings and their staves. Lanfranc interceded for his brethren; Alexander yielded. The decision of the question was left to the archbishop, and by him the episcopal insignia were restored, who, as Malmesbury says, “made a joyful return to their country in his company.” Before they left the Papal Court, another question had to be discussed. There had been a long-standing controversy between the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, about the limits of their respective provinces. This was revived by Thomas, who introduced a new claim on the sees of Worcester, Lichfield, and Dorchester. Alexander wisely declined to give any judgment on a matter requiring for its settlement more local know-

ledge than he possessed, and referred it to a Council of the Bishops and Abbots of England. The cause was debated first in Winchester, and then at Windsor in a Council of the whole realm. The decision was wholly in favour of Canterbury. The Humber to the east, and the northern limits of the diocese of Lichfield (then including Cheshire, and indifferently called by the title of Lichfield or Chester) to the west, went for the dividing line between the provinces. Remigius and his successors were to be suffragans of Canterbury, not of York. Thus the controversy was set at rest for a time, to be revived again by Thomas in a modified form in the days of Rufus.

A few months at most after the conclusion of these synods, so important in their bearing on the future history of the Church of England, Remigius, with Thomas of York again as his companion, attended Lanfranc on a second visit to the Papal Court, as ambassadors from William. They were the bearers of large gifts, which they lavishly bestowed on the Papal Court, receiving in return the meed of admiration for "their eloquence and learning,"¹ and bringing back the papal confirmation of certain unspecified privileges.

Remigius' episcopal position being now fully established, he at once set himself, with vigour and sound judgment, to the task of the organization of his diocese. The work was a gigantic one. Not only was the diocese the largest in England, reaching from the Humber to the Thames, but its condition, socially and religiously, was one urgently calling for the strong hand of a vigorous reformer. We may not unreasonably regard

¹ Ordericus Vitalis, 548, C.

Giraldus' picture of the moral state of the Dorchester diocese as exaggerated. He was never over careful of truth, and when he had an end to serve, he was not incapable of drawing his facts from his imagination. His biography of Remigius was written with a special object. The church of Lincoln wanted a local saint, and for lack of a better one, they were ready to accept Remigius as their patron, even though, from all we know of him from writers near his time, he had small claim to the honour. But, though probably much overdrawn, the account given by Giraldus probably contains considerable elements of truth, and we may safely believe that the task before Remigius, in the moral elevation of his people, was no light one. One essential measure for the better organization of the diocese was the transference of the see. Like all sagacious rulers, he realized the importance of a strong centre. To one accustomed to the great episcopal cities of Normandy, where, by "a tradition of Roman date, the bishop's home, his head church, his bishopric in the head church, were all in the city"¹ which gave him his style and name, Remigius would be naturally mortified at finding himself planted in a village insignificant in size and scanty in population—"exilis et infrequens," Malmesbury calls it—and inconveniently situated² on the outer fringe of his huge diocese, only the Thames separating him from that of Ramsbury. But, like a wise and far-seeing man, he acted with deliberation. He first made

¹ Freeman, *William the Conqueror*, p. 137.

² "Incompetenter et satis obscure positam."—*Charter of W. Cong.*, Dugdale, vol. vi., p. 1270.

trial of Dorchester as his episcopal home, and meditated the erection of a cathedral to replace the old minster, which Malmesbury tells us he had already begun to improve. Experience proving its unsuitability for a bishop's see, having obtained the royal licence for the transference, as well as the authority of the pope and his legates, and the approbation of Lanfranc, he removed the episcopal seat to Lincoln, even in that early period one of the chief commercial towns of England, the resort of traders both by land and by sea,¹ the key of Eastern England. Here on the southern crest of the steep ascent overlooking the broad valley of the Witham, then to a great extent fen and swamp, he, partly by purchase and partly by royal grant, secured a tract of ground, "in the very bosom of the city," as the Royal Charter states, but quiet and removed from the busy din of men—"quietam et ab omni garrulitatis strepitu liberam,"²—already partly consecrated by an old church of St. Mary Magdalene. The spot was near to the gateway of the castle, already rising to "curb the haughty Danish burghers of the rich and famous city." Here he laid the foundations of the first cathedral of Lincoln, "strong as the place was strong, fair as the place was fair; as acceptable to the servants of God as it was secure from the attack of all enemies."³ The date of the actual transference cannot be precisely given. But, as Remigius signed as "Episcopus Dorcacensis" at the Council of Windsor in 1072, which fixed the limits

¹ W. of Malmesbury, "Emporium hominum terra marique venientium."

² Dugdale, vol. vi., p. 1270.

³ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 212.

of the province of York, and as "Episcopus Lincolnensis" at that of London in 1075, in which the principle already adopted by him of the transference of bishops' sees from *villæ* to *civitates* became the subject of a legislative decree, it must have taken place somewhere between those two dates. The new see was confirmed by a royal charter, given immediately after the Council of London. By this charter William granted the bishop his two manors of Welton and Sleaford, and the three churches of Kirton, Caistor, and Wellingore, with their lands and tithes, and the two Lincoln churches of All Saints and St. Martin's. William also confirmed to the see the churches of Bedford, Leighton, Buckingham, and Aylesbury, which the Bishops of Dorchester had held, together with the manor of Leicester, which Earl Waltheof had given to the bishop, and the manor of Woburn (Bucks), which the king had granted him, "with the pastoral staff," for the building of the church of Lincoln. The charter also mentions the erection of houses and offices for the ministers of the church and the provision of an ample burial-ground under its walls.

Deferring the erection of the minster and the arrangements of the chapter to a later page, we will now proceed to Remigius' organization of the diocese. The first step towards its amelioration was to become personally acquainted with its condition. For this end he commenced a personal visitation of the diocese. According to Giraldus, whose account, as has been said, must be somewhat discounted, he went through the vast province "from end to end," penetrating

every part, combining the strong hand of a ruler with the tender care of a father, and never ceasing his labour until, by his preaching and teaching, he had, as far as was possible—"pro posse suo"—rooted out the enormities of his flock, and "like a good shepherd, and not a hireling, he had planted virtues in their place."¹ The administrative arrangements of the diocese next engaged his attention. We cannot be far wrong in regarding the diocese of Lincoln as the first of the English dioceses to be mapped out in archdeaconries. From its immense area, far too large for the superintendence of one bishop, however vigorous, efficient government could only be carried out by the aid of subordinates. The separation between secular and ecclesiastical courts, introduced by William, rendered necessary the establishment of Church Courts, with recognized authority and a definite local jurisdiction, to be administered by duly appointed officials. For this purpose. Remigius employed the order of archdeacons, which was now, as a consequence of William's legislative action, becoming a new, and eventually a somewhat oppressive, power in the land. "Up to this time," writes Bishop Stubbs, "bishops had done most of their own work. One archdeacon, generally in deacons' orders, had been a sufficient 'eye' for the bishop, when he could not be personally present. The Norman bishops wanted more than one eye, and almost immediately after the Conqueror's legislative separation of the Courts, we find the archidiaconal service formed on the plan of that of the Sheriffs, the larger dioceses, such as Lincoln, being

¹ Giraldu Cambrensis, vol. vii., p. 20.

broken up into many archdeaconries, and the smaller ones following their example." "The archdeacons, who had been ministers of the bishop in all parts of the diocese alike, received each his own district, which in most cases coincided with the county."¹

The archdeaconries established by Remigius were seven in number, viz., one for each of the six counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Leicester, Lincoln, Northampton, and Oxford. The seventh was that of Huntingdon, including within its limits the county of Hunts, and those portions of Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire which were not contained within the jurisdiction of the Abbots of Ely and St. Albans. Henry of Huntingdon, in the treatise, *De contemptu mundi*,² supplies us with the names, and in some instances the characteristics, of the archdeacons appointed by Remigius, and their immediate successors, "all most honourable clerks and venerable persons." Richard, he tells us, was the first Archdeacon of Lincoln, followed successively by Albert Longbeard, William of Bayeux, and Robert the younger, "by far the richest of all the archdeacons then in England." Huntingdon, with the annexed portions of Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, had for its archdeacon, Nicholas, famed for the beauty of his person, and hardly less for the beauty of his character, who was succeeded by Henry of Huntingdon himself. Northamptonshire had Nigel, succeeded by Robert, and then by William "the excellent," nephew of Bishop

¹ Stubbs, *Lectures on Medieval History*, p. 300; *Constit. Hist.*, vol. i., p. 117.

² p. 302.

Alexander. Ralph was Archdeacon of Leicester, followed by Godfrey, Walter "vir omnino laudandus," and Robert de Chesney, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln. Oxford "was presided over by Alfred, succeeded by Walter of Wallingford, superlatively eloquent"; Buckingham by another Alfred, known as "the little," succeeded by Gilbert, celebrated for the elegance both of his prose and verse, and also of his dress; and then by Roger Clinton, elected Bishop of Chester, *i. e.* Lichfield, in 1192. He had for his successor, Richard de Urville, and David brother of Bishop Alexander. Finally, Bedford had for its first archdeacon, Osbert, succeeded by Ralph, "miserably slain"; he by Hugh, and Hugh by another Nicholas.

The history of the foundation of the Archdeaconry of Stow is very obscure. Its omission by Henry of Huntingdon proves that it was not one of those established by Remigius, nor is there any mention of its origin in any later writer. But Osbert appears, in some Chapter records in 1138, as Archdeacon of the "West Riding," the earlier name of the district, and Alexander in 1197. The first who bears the title of Archdeacon of Stow is William of Thorney, who held the office in 1213, in the episcopate of Hugh of Wells. Browne Willis hazards the conjecture that it was founded by Bishop Alexander, with which the earlier dates given above would agree. The organization of his diocese thus completed, Remigius prosecuted the erection of his cathedral with vigour. Enough of the original fabric remains to show that it was a typical example of the great Norman minster, exhibiting its "transmarine style"—that "*novum compositionis genus*," of

which the Confessor's great Abbey at Westminster and the College of Harold at Waltham were the earliest specimens seen in England, but which were now making an ineffaceable architectural mark on every part of the land from Lindisfarne to Winchester, and from Norwich to Hereford. Of the vast structures which in keen rivalry were rising at the bidding of William's new bishops and abbots, Remigius' Minster must have been almost the earliest. It is of the full Norman plan, comprising a nave and side aisles, transepts, and a short apsidal choir, without aisles or procession path. There was a lantern tower at the crossing. Western towers were prepared for, but not carried above the roof, and were left to be completed by the third Norman prelate, Alexander "the magnificent." Though immense when compared with the pre-conquestal churches, except the few like Westminster, built under Norman influence, the church of Remigius did not aspire to such vast dimensions as some of the contemporary structures, such as that of Abbot Paul at St. Albans, and that of Bishop Maurice at St. Paul's. The interior length was about 300 feet—full 150 or 160 feet short of the present church—by 28 feet in breadth—10 feet less than at present—and 60 feet in height. The length of the transepts we have no present means of determining. The small remains of the fabric show the Norman style in its sternest simplicity, characterized by massiveness of construction, and a severe abstinence from ornaments. The masonry is wide-jointed, and the stones small and generally square. The portion of the design which remains practically unaltered—the central sec-

tion of the West Front—displays decided originality. It consists of a great screen wall standing in front of the western towers, in which are hollowed three deep cavernous recesses, answering in height to that of the centre and side aisles. The two lateral recesses retain their unmoulded semicircular arches of the most austere plainness. Most of the central recess has been removed, and replaced by a pointed arch of Early English date, to adapt it to the increased height. On the other side of the lateral recesses is a singular apsidal recess or niche, of unique design, in which, being nearer the edge, the architect has relaxed a little from his uncompromising plainness, and the arches are moulded and the capitals rudely carved. The face of the front, plain even to baldness, is unbroken by buttress or projection of any kind, and the window openings are few and insignificant. The only ornamental accessory which relieves its bareness is a band of sculpture, representing scenes from the Fall, the Deluge, Daniel in the Lions' Den, and other scriptural and symbolical subjects, extending across it. The want of orderly arrangement in these bas-reliefs, and some evidences of mutilation, seem to indicate that this was not their original situation, and that they had belonged to some earlier buildings. They are certainly some of the very earliest religious sculptures in England.

From the material fabric reared by Remigius, we now pass to the living body of which it was to be the home. The keen-sighted practical wisdom which directed all his operations, is shown in his selection for the government and administration of his church, of a

constitution which, though adapting itself to changing times and changing circumstances, has remained unaltered in all its main features to the present day. After eight centuries the form of the Chapter and the duties of its members are, roughly speaking, the same with those established by him. It is a notable fact that Remigius, though a monk—perhaps we may say because he had been a monk, and had practical experience of the weaknesses of the monastic system—seems never to have contemplated establishing a monastic house in connection with his new cathedral; but adopting the constitution of the great Norman cathedrals, with which he was familiar, to have contemplated from the first the foundation of a college of secular canons—men who, to adopt his words, “lived in the world to look after the souls of others, instead of going out of the world to look after their own souls”; and too often, while they deserted one duty, doing the other badly, and thus coming short in both. The old struggle between regulars and seculars, which had been going on from the days of Dunstan, was still being waged. Bishops and great men were in one place substituting monks for canons, and in another canons for monks, and though in the end the coming of the Normans secured the victory for the regular clergy, wiser counsels prevailing, the secular cause triumphed at Lichfield as it did contemporaneously at York and Salisbury, and subsequently in not a few other cathedrals.¹ The attempt had been a failure both at

¹ Besides these three, the cathedrals of St. Paul's London, Chichester, Exeter, Hereford, Lichfield, and Wells, and the four cathedrals of Wales, from the Conquest onwards, have enjoyed the same constitution as secular colleges. These, as need hardly

Canterbury and Winchester. At the latter, Walkelin had experienced the humiliation of seeing his prebendaries dislodged by papal deans, and monks occupying their places. But if there were any obstacles to the fulfilment of his design, Remigius surmounted them. Making no attempt to introduce the Lotharingian discipline—midway between the secular and the regular system—of a common refectory and common dormitory, which had so signally failed at Exeter and Wells, and had been ineffectually tried by Thomas at York, he introduced the constitution existing at Rouen, primarily derived from Bayeux, which is the real mother “of the Lincoln code.”¹ By this constitution the administration of the Church was carried out by “a new and careful gradation of officers, each with his own special function,” working under an official head, the Dean, the chief of them all. First came the Precentor or Chanter, who regulated the service of worship, then, as in all early times, indissolubly connected with music and song. Next to him ranked the Chancellor, the secretary and literary officer of the Chapter, the keeper of and lecturer in the theological school, then an essential function

be said, are the so-called cathedrals “of the Old Foundation,” *i.e.* those which continued through the Reformation period without any fundamental change. Those of “the New Foundation” are such as, being monastic churches, were dissolved, together with the other monasteries, by Henry VIII., and refounded by him as Chapters of a Dean and Prebendaries. These are, including Henry’s four new foundations, Canterbury, Bristol, Carlisle, Chester, Durham, Ely, Gloucester, Norwich, Oxford, Peterborough, Rochester, Winchester, and Worcester. Monastic cathedrals were almost peculiar to England.

¹ *Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral*, p. 102.

of the cathedral body. The third in order was the treasurer, not a treasurer in the modern sense, as the guardian and manager of the funds of the Chapter, but the keeper of the *treasures* of the church—the altar-plate and ornaments, and the vestments of its ministers. These three—the Sub-dean being a later creation—formed, with the Dean, the four “dignities” of the cathedral. Next in rank followed the seven archdeacons, of whom we have already spoken. Besides these, Remigius founded twenty-one canonries, and dividing the estates of the church into shares or “prebends,” he allotted one to each canon as his separate maintenance, from which he took his title. Thus, each member of the body was at the same time a canon of the cathedral church, and prebendary of the place from which he drew his income, and of which, if it were a spiritual benefice, he was patron. The oblations at the altars went to increase their revenues. The dignitaries also received their suitable endowments.

Monasticism received little aid from Remigius. William of Malmesbury ascribes to him the reproduction as a Benedictine house of the great Abbey of Bardney, which had lain in ruins since its destruction by the Danes two centuries before. The true founder of this great abbey, afterwards mitred, the largest and most powerful in the whole county of Lincoln, with the exception of Crowland, was the great Norman baron, Gilbert of Ghent, *c.* 1086. Remigius, with his large-handed munificence, may very probably have conferred considerable gifts on the Abbey, and helped it with his patronage, but his

only certain connection with the monastery is the licence granted by him for its re-establishment, and his signature to the charter of foundation. He has a better claim to be regarded as the founder of the short-lived Benedictine Abbey of Stow. If we may trust the foundation charter—and the language of charters is not always quite trustworthy—the church reserved as a secular college by his predecessor, Bishop Wulfwig, and enriched by Leofric and Godiva, had in that short interval fallen into decay by the neglect of its heads, and was refounded by Remigius as a house of Benedictine monks under the rule of an abbot bearing the historic name of Columbanus. Whether Remigius endowed Stow with any of his personal estates is not stated. Certainly the chief endowment, besides those of earlier times, was that of the Oxfordshire Abbey of Eynsham, which was transferred to the Lincolnshire house in the second year of Rufus, to be transferred back again to Eynsham by Remigius' successor, Robert Bloet.

The cathedral was now sufficiently completed to warrant its consecration. Remigius had completed his thirty-fourth year as bishop, and feeling that his end was drawing near, he appealed to the king—not his grand royal patron, but his unworthy son—for licence for the ceremony. In the January of 1090 he had taken part in the National Council held by Rufus at Dover, and had signed as witness to the donation of the Abbey of Bath to John de Villule, Bishop of Wells. This would give him an opportunity of urging his request. But an obstacle intervened. Thomas of York revived a portion of the claim he had been

forced to forego at the Windsor Council fifteen years before, not now demanding metropolitan authority over the whole of Remigius' diocese, but claiming direct episcopal power over the portion which had formed the old diocese of Lindsey, together with the towns of Lincoln, Louth, Stow, and Newark. There was now no Lanfranc to appeal to, to decide the question. He had died the previous year, A.D. 1089, and the ungodly king was in no hurry to fill up the vacancy; the decision rested with Rufus alone. With him one argument only was powerful, and that argument Remigius did not shrink from employing. As he had gained his bishopric by a gift adroitly administered to the father, he had little scruple to secure the consecration of his minster and the adjustment of the confines of his diocese, by an open bribe to the son. He felt death fast approaching. What he had to do he must do quickly, or he would never see it done. The sum given is not stated, but Florence of Worcester tells us that "for the money which Remigius had given," his request was granted, the day of the consecration fixed, and a royal mandate issued to the whole episcopate of the realm, together with the barons and high functionaries, to attend the ceremony. May 9, 1092, was the appointed day. An immense crowd of men of all ranks, the king being probably of the number, had assembled at Lincoln, when, three days before that fixed for the hallowing of the vast church, on the day of our Lord's Ascension, May 6, then coinciding with the Festival of St. John ad Portam Latinam, Remigius expired, and the assembly of magnates dispersed "re infecta." One of the English bishops,

Robert the Lotharingian of Hereford, we are told, had been saved from undertaking this fruitless journey by his astrological knowledge. The stars assured him that the dedication would not take place on the appointed day. He did not keep this warning to himself,¹ but it was not heeded, and he alone of the episcopal band remained at home. The service of dedication was changed into that of a funeral. Remigius was hastily buried, in the cathedral he had built, on the day of his death, before the altar of the Holy Cross, the place of which was in the middle of the west side of the "pulpitum," or screen dividing the nave from the choir, between the two doors, which we still see at St. Albans and Crowland, beneath the great rood or crucifix. Little as there was distinctively saintly in Remigius' character, decidedly unsaintly as was the mode of his obtaining his bishopric, and that of procuring the dedication of his cathedral, in default of any other claimant to the title he gradually "won the honours of a saint in local esteem, and wonders of healing were wrought at his tomb for the benefit of not a few of divers tongues and even of divers creeds."² An account of the miracles reputed to be wrought at his tomb is given by Giraldus. This would be based upon the register kept by the custodian of his tomb, whose interest it was to make their number as large and their character as clear as possible; the earlier miracles being only recorded on the authority of very doubtful tradition. Remigius, like his great successor,

¹ "Viderat nec tacuerat."—W. of Malmesbury, *Gest. Pont.*, p. 313.

² Freeman, *W. Rufus*, vol. i., p. 314.

St. Hugh, was the subject of a translation ; but one rather of necessity than of honour. In the conflagration which destroyed the roof of the church in Alexander's time, *c.* 1141, one of the beams fell on the slab which covered his tomb, and broke it into two pieces, and laid the body bare. The corpse, it is said, was found still uncorrupted, and it was transferred with great pomp to a spot where it would not be subject to such constant traffic, to the north of its former position, probably under one of the arches of the arcade. According to Giraldus, the translation of the body was accompanied by fresh proofs of Remigius' claims to saintship, which, however, failed to secure him a place among the canonized of the Church. An irreverent knight, who out of curiosity made an ineffectual attempt to pull out some of the hairs of the beard, was stricken with disease, and kept his bed a whole year. The ring upon the finger of the corpse gave healing virtue to water in which it was steeped, or the cure of fevers and other sicknesses. Till in St. Hugh the church of Lincoln possessed a patron of whose sanctity there could be no question, they made the best they could of Remigius, whose local canonization, however—like that of John of Dalderby at a later period—was never ratified by a papal decree.

But if the pretensions of Remigius to saintly order were small, we must not be blind to his merits as a large-hearted and generous man, of great organizing and administrative ability, who showed himself to be just such a bishop as was wanted for the government of a huge, disconnected, and demoralized diocese, after a great national convulsion. If some less honour-

able motives swayed William in the selection of his first bishop, the episcopate of Remigius fully justified his choice. With a firm hand and vigorous practical wisdom, he introduced an ecclesiastical organization which tended greatly to the efficiency of the Church. The division of the dioceses into archdeaconries, each with its ecclesiastical head, first originated in England by him, enabled the bishops to exercise supervision over every part, and to make their authority more real. The removal of his see to Lincoln, and the erection of a cathedral of superior size and stateliness, administered not by monks, but by secular clerks, were all important steps in establishing the new system under which the Church has continually grown and prospered. Next to Lanfranc there is no one who more justly deserves to be honoured as a builder up of the Church than Remigius. What his personal character was we can never truly know. According to Giraldus, he was a model of piety, sanctity, and charity, conspicuous as "the defender of orphans and wards, and the supporter of the afflicted," expending all his own goods—if such there were—and those of the Church on the poor and needy. Thirteen destitute persons sat at table with him every day. Every Friday he washed the feet of that day's guests. During the three summer months—the winter months would have seemed more fitting—he fed a thousand poor daily, and provided a hundred and sixty of the blind, lame, and disabled annually with clothing and victuals. Giraldus also ascribes to him, but almost certainly erroneously—Henry I. having been more probably the founder—the foundation of the Malandry Hospital

of St. Innocents, outside the Southern or Bar Gate at Lincoln, for lepers, where, according to the same authority, he frequently visited and consoled. But the whole of this somewhat highly-coloured account rests on the sole authority of the unveracious Giraldus, and must be taken "cum grano salis." As Mr. Dimock says, we need not regard "all he tells us about the virtue and sanctity of Remigius as his own invention, but it all rests, so far as we know, upon no better authority than his own very bad authority. His account of Remigius' excellences may be based on traditions he found at Lincoln; but all record of such traditions, if any ever existed has long since disappeared." There is an incident in Remigius' career, recorded only by Henry of Huntingdon, which it is difficult to know what to make of. He states that at one time, apparently from the context after he became a bishop, he was accused of treasonable practices, and was cleared of the charge and restored to the royal favour, by the ordeal of red-hot iron, sustained not by himself, but by one of his servants in his lord's stead. It has been suggested that this may refer to the conspiracy of Ralph the Wader, hatched at the wedding feast at Exning, in 1075, where

"There was that bride-ale,
To many men's bale,"

at which a large company of bishops was gathered. But the whole story is very obscure.

CHAPTER III

THREE NORMAN BISHOPS

AFTER the death of Remigius the see of Lincoln remained without an occupant for nearly two years. His successor, Robert Bloet, was not consecrated till Feb. 12, 1094. The cause of the delay was the unrighteous system which, first inaugurated by the unscrupulous Ralph Flambard, was continued at intervals even down to the reign of Elizabeth (one of the most shameless offenders in this respect), of treating ecclesiastical benefices as lay fiefs, reverting on the death of an occupant to the lord paramount till the appointment of a successor. In the case of bishoprics and abbacies, therefore, it became the interest of the sovereign to delay the nomination of a successor as long as possible, meanwhile sweeping their revenues into the royal treasury. Rufus, ever greedy and rapacious, had in Flambard a minister entirely after his own heart, and threw himself eagerly into the system which made the king heir of every man, whether cleric or layman. Lanfranc, his father's wise counsellor, whose firm hand might have restrained him, had died three

years before Remigius, and no successor had been appointed, the king declaring that "he would be archbishop himself." The Church was thus without a head; Flambard practically ruled England for his own and his royal master's profit, and in the words of the chronicler in that evil time, "the Church of God was brought low." Simony was rampant. Bishoprics were kept vacant till some one was found willing and able to pay down as much ready money as would make it worth the sovereign's while to relax his grasp on the income of the see. It was only by a skilfully applied bribe that Robert Bloet secured his consecration, nor, in a time of almost universal clerical degradation, when members of the spiritual order engaged in secular callings, farmed the taxes, and made the amassing of wealth their chief object, was he thought the worse of for using the only argument which was powerful with his sovereign.

Bloet was a Norman by birth, the brother of Hugh, Bishop of Bayeux. His name signifies "blond" or "fair," and is thus synonymous with Blecca the reeve, who five centuries before had aided Paulinus to build the first Christian church in Lindsey. He had been a confidential Chancery clerk of the Conqueror, according to Henry of Huntingdon the chancellor himself. While William was slowly breathing out his soul at St. Gervais, in the suburbs of Rouen, Bloet was in attendance on his dying master, and received from his hands the all-important letter addressed to Lanfranc, nominating Rufus to the throne. The destined heir was also there, and after receiving his father's last kiss and blessing, he started,

with the bearer of the missive as his companion, to Toques on the Norman coast. Here they received news of William's death, Sept. 9, 1087, and at once set sail for England. The letter of which Bloet was the bearer was delivered by him to Lanfranc. His dear master's dying wishes were sacred to him, and in little more than a fortnight Rufus received the crown from his hands. It can excite no surprise that one who had been deemed worthy of so high a trust, and to whose faithful fulfilment of that trust he owed his throne, should be selected for high office by the new king. Bloet became his chancellor. Of the manner in which he fulfilled his office nothing is said. He was probably neither much better nor much worse than his contemporaries. He was evidently a bishop of the more worldly sort; fond of pomp and display, lavish in his personal expenditure, magnificent in his retinue, easy-going and self-indulgent, but grandly generous in his benefactions, especially to his cathedral. He showed himself the patron of learned and good men, and had personal characteristics which endeared him to all about him; if not among the best, certainly far from being the worst of the bishops of that evil time.

Bloet's bishopric, however, was not purchased by any overt act of simony. It was one of the fruits of Rufus' transient fit of repentance when he lay sick nigh unto death at Gloucester, in Lent 1093, which also gained for the English Church the saintly Anselm for the long-vacant primacy. Anselm was consecrated Dec. 4, 1093. The next day he was purposing to consecrate Bloet; but once again

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Thomas of York interposed. Anselm might consecrate Bloet to the ancient see of Dorchester if he pleased, but not to Lincoln, which with the parts of Lindsey, the "west-riding" of the county, he asserted belonged to the province of York. Anselm does not seem to have contested the point, and the consecration was deferred for two months. It might have been postponed much longer, for Rufus, no longer in fear of imminent death, had fallen back into his old bad ways, and was openly expressing his regret that he had let the bishopric slip out of his fingers without compensation. Thomas' claim gave him an opportunity for redressing his transient weakness. Bloet had to buy the king's intervention in the dispute by an enormous bribe, stated by some to have amounted to £5000, when money was many times more valuable than now. After making due profession to Anselm and the see of Canterbury, and thus settling the controversy between the two primates for all time, but (which was the ground of not unreasonable complaint at York) without previously apprising Archbishop Thomas or his chapter, he was consecrated on Feb. 12, 1094, by Anselm and other bishops, eight in all, who had assembled for the dedication of the Conqueror's abbey of Battle, which took place the preceding day. The ceremony was performed in the Chapel of St. Mary, within the castle of Hastings, where Rufus was gathering his forces to make war against his brother Robert. The close of this long-standing dispute was formally set forth in a royal charter,¹ the Archbishop of York receiving in

¹ Dugdale, vol. vi,

compensation for his claim on Lindsey the patronage of the new Abbey of Selby, and that of the church of St. Oswald, at Gloucester. On his consecration Bloet resigned his chancellorship, but being far too useful a secular official to be permitted to devote himself entirely to his spiritual functions, which were also probably far less to his mind, he became justiciar of Henry I.

Of Bloet's administration of his episcopate we know but little. His cathedral was not neglected by him. He appears to have made no attempt to carry up Remigius' unfinished western towers, or in any other way to add to the completeness of the fabric. But his benefactions to his church were on a princely scale. He greatly augmented the revenues of the cathedral by the purchase of lands and manors, and doubled the number of canons, raising them from the twenty-one left by Remigius to forty-two, providing each with prebendal estates for their maintenance. The ritual of the Church and the attire of its ministers was also no less an object of care. Bloet was one who loved to surround himself with pomp and splendour. Henry of Huntingdon, who was brought up in his court, gives us a dazzling picture of the almost regal magnificence of his daily life—his troop of horsemen and noble steeds, the youths of rank who formed his retinue, the costly plate of his side-board, the luxurious dishes of his table, and the purple and fine linen with which it was decked. But it was not on himself and his household alone that his wealth was lavished. His resolve was that of King David, that the House of God over which he

presided and its services should be "exceeding magnifical." When nearly a century later Giraldus Cambrensis visited Lincoln, he found the memory first of his costly gifts—the crosses and vessels of precious metals, cloths of silver and gold of marvellous workmanship, velvet palls and copes embroidered with gold, reliquaries, and other ornaments. The interrupted dedication of the cathedral was performed. The exact date of this is uncertain, but July 17, 1095, may probably be assigned to it. Rufus ended his ill-spent life Aug. 2, 1100. Bloet retained the confidence of his new sovereign, as whose justiciar he exercised almost supreme power, deeply "dreaded by all."¹ Two years after Henry's accession, on the revolt of Robert de Bellême, Bloet was despatched on the hardly bishop-like service of besieging the castle of Tickhill, in the extreme south of Yorkshire, which the traitor earl had put in a state of defence, while Henry himself attacked Bridgenorth, and regained it for the Crown. At Michaelmas of the same year, 1102, Bloet appears in a more appropriate character, as taking part in Anselm's great synod at Westminster, by which, among other decrees, celibacy was declared binding on all clerks from sub-deacons upwards. Up to that time the marriage of the clergy, though forbidden by Lanfranc, was tacitly winked at. Bloet himself was probably a married man. Certainly he had a son, Simon, whom he subsequently made dean of his cathedral; and though the bishop is described as a loose and licentious liver by William of Malmesbury

¹ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 299.

in the earlier draught of his history,—a charge which is much softened in the later edition of the work,—the brand of illegitimacy is never affixed to his offspring. Worldly man as he was, and a trusted officer of Henry, we can feel no surprise that Anselm received no support from Bloet in his courageous struggle against the Crown in the matter of investitures. On the settlement of the dispute by a compromise between Henry and Pope Paschal in 1107, Bloet took part with Anselm and his brother primate, Gerard of York, in the long-delayed consecration of the mighty Roger of Sarum, Giffard of Winchester, and four others to the sees to which they had been nominated by the king. In the quarrel between the two primatial sees, arising from the refusal of the newly-elected Archbishop of York, Thomas II., to make professions of obedience to the see of Canterbury, which embittered the closing months of Anselm's life, Bloet vigorously supported Anselm's claim in defiance of the wishes of Henry. After a long struggle the king gave way, and Thomas, on his consecration at St. Paul's, June 27, 1109, was compelled to make the unwelcome profession, not, however, to Anselm, who two months before had entered into the peace which had been so long denied him on earth.

It was during the episcopate of Bloet that the huge diocese of Lincoln received its first curtailment, by the establishment in 1109 of the see of Ely, comprising the single county of Cambridge. The one cause alleged for the separation in the letter of Anselm to Pope Paschal II., and in the pope's reply,

was the vast extent of the diocese, which rendered it impossible for any single bishop to exercise spiritual oversight of the whole. The new see was formally established, with Hervey for its bishop, by a council sitting in London, in 1108, under the presidency of Anselm, and the Bishop of Lincoln had to be satisfied with the manor of Spaldwick, in Huntingdonshire, as a compensation for the loss of a whole county. Hervey took a journey to Rome to secure from the pope the confirmation of the new see, of which on his return he was formally put in possession, June 27, 1109. In the following October the transaction received fresh authorization by a council sitting at Nottingham, and a charter of foundation was granted by Henry to the new see. This curtailment of his diocese, which still remained the largest in England, comprising nine counties, we may be inclined to consider one of the best results of Bloet's lengthened episcopate, but it was regarded in a very different light by his contemporaries and successors at Lincoln. To them it appeared "an enormous deterioration of his church," which by the separation lost all the profits of the surrendered territory, when "a bishopric, like a kingdom, was coming to be looked on as a property," to be made the most of, rather than an office charged with solemn responsibilities and high spiritual functions. Among the many charges brought against this much-maligned prelate, his acquiescence in the loss of so rich a portion of his diocese is one of the most frequent. But whatever the character of the transaction, Bloet's responsibility for it was of the slightest. He was in

no respect a free agent. The act which, as Giraldus laments, robbed Lincoln of one of her fairest daughters, is ascribed by him to "the will and violence of the king."¹ The consent alleged was extorted from him; nor had he refused to give it would it have made any difference.

Another of what Giraldus calls his "mad follies," *deliramenta*, by which Bloet impoverished his see, was his gift to the king of a robe of the costliest cloth, lined with ermine, worth £100, and saddling his successors with a like gift, annually. Among the many good acts of St. Hugh, is his having relieved his see of this burden at his own cost.

Bloet, it is true, was no saint, and even in those dark days his life afforded no model for imitation for bishops; but much of the obloquy cast on him may be set down to ecclesiastical jealousy. Seculars and regulars were ever at variance. Each as ready to believe anything to the discredit of the others; the good was discounted, the bad was exaggerated. Now Bloet was a secular of the seculars. The monastic orders received scant recognition at his hands. Whether the removal of the monks from Stow to Ensham in Oxfordshire was, as Giraldus calls it, a "praiseworthy change," dictated by the advantage of the conventual body, and not chiefly, as Giraldus hints, blowing hot and cold according to his manner, to secure for himself and his successors in the see a pleasant country manorial residence within a few miles of the cathedral, it is certain that it was a very

¹ "Per regiam voluntatem et violentiam," Giraldus Cambrensis, vol. vii., p. 32.

unpopular act, and provoked the ill-will of the regulars generally, not being compensated for by other grants made to religious houses. Their enmity was increased by the prominent part he took in 1122, on the death of Anselm's successor, Ralf d'Escenes, in the episcopal opposition to the claim of the monks of Canterbury to elect one of their own order to the primacy, which ended in the triumph of the secular party in the appointment of William de Corbeuil. Bloet, however, did not live to take part in his consecration, Feb. 11, 1123, his sudden death having occurred about a month previously.

One of the notable events of the later days of Bloet's episcopate was the consecration of the Abbey Church of St. Albans, begun by Abbot Paul, Lanfranc's cousin, but not completed till the time of his successor, in the presence of Henry I., his queen, and a large company of prelates and nobles, Christmas 1116. Hertfordshire forming part of the diocese of Lincoln, it belonged to Bloet's prerogative to perform the act of dedication, but according to the historians of the time, he had to resign the chief place to Geoffrey, Archbishop of Rouen, only completing the ceremony when, through the immense size of the church, the archbishop had to give over through fatigue. The abbot at that time was Richard de Albini, who, feeling himself unequal to maintain discipline in so large a monastic body, placed his house under the bishops of Lincoln, his predecessors having acknowledged only a nominal subjection to the archbishops of Canterbury. This act was very distasteful to subsequent abbots, who did not rest until, in the time of the next

bishop but one, Robert de Chesney, they secured complete independence.

The close of Bloet's life was overclouded in a manner which a man of his love of outward state could not fail to feel deeply. Vexatious suits brought against him by a subordinate justiciar of low birth, with the connivance of the king, and the infliction of fines, had greatly reduced his resources, and compelled him to curtail the splendour of his retinue. His archdeacon, Henry of Huntingdon, brought up from his earliest years in his family, tells us how one day when sitting at table the bishop burst into tears. "Why does my lord weep?" asked Henry. "Why? Rather how can I refrain from weeping when I see the miserable change? The time was when those who waited at my table were splendidly apparelled; now, as you see, they are clad in lambs' wool, to such penury have the exactions of the king reduced me." The archdeacon, to comfort him, repeated some words of high praise concerning him the king had recently uttered. Bloet replied with a deep sigh, "That seals my doom. The king never praises any of his ministers unless he minds to ruin him. No one knows so well how to dissimulate." The bishop's end was very near, but it came by the hand of God, not of man. It is told in graphic language by the Peterborough chronicler. Only a few days after this conversation, in the first days of 1123, Bloet was summoned by Henry to Woodstock. On January 10 the king was riding in his "deer-fold," Roger, bishop of Salisbury, was on one side of him, Robert Bloet on the other. "They were then riding and talking."

Then the Bishop of Lincoln sank down and said, "Lord king, I die." The king alighted and caught the bishop in his arms. He was carried to a house, "alive but speechless, and he was forthwith dead." His body was disembowelled and carried to Lincoln, where he was buried "with great worship," in his minster before St. Mary's altar. When it had become the fashion to blacken his memory, it was the common talk that his tomb was haunted at night by evil spectres, to the terror of the watchmen, until it was purified with prayers and masses and alms. The epitaph recorded by Henry of Huntingdon, and his own words descriptive of his character, are of a far different tenor. Posthumous praise, especially that given to a lifelong friend and patron, is not very trustworthy. But there must have been much that was good, if not of the highest degree of goodness, in one of whom it could be said by one who knew him well, that as a bishop he was gentle and lowly, humble in the midst of his riches; who lifted many, crushed none; the father of orphans, the delight of his friends; whose aim it was not to be a master but a father to his people.

It is during Bloet's episcopate that we have the first reference to a bishop's residence in Lincoln. Licence was granted to him by Henry I. (c. 1110) to pierce the city wall to form a way of access to his house, "*ad domum suam*," provided the wall was not weakened thereby. The round-headed doorway made at this time may still be seen in the north wall of the palace precinct, now half buried in the earth. Whether Bloet acquired the ground on which his successors

erected this palace is uncertain, but we have no mention of it under Remigius.

A word must be said respecting Bloet's son Simon. He was born probably in honest wedlock, while his father was chancellor to the Conqueror. He received a princely education, of which his great intellect enabled him to take advantage, and he showed great promise of future eminence. Comely of person and fluent of speech, he rose high in favour with the king and his courtiers. While still a youth he was made Dean of Lincoln by his father. But his early elevation turned his head. He became haughty and overbearing, and turned the good-will of the nobles into envy and hatred. According to Huntingdon, he used to boast that "he was to the courtiers as salt is to eels; for as salt tortures the eels, so did he torture the courtiers by his gibes." He fell into disgrace with the king, by whom he was imprisoned. He made his escape through a drain, and while still a young man tasted the miseries of exile. His career is employed by Huntingdon as an illustration of the vanity of all human greatness in his treatise, *De contemptu mundi*, so full of curious biographical details.

The see of Lincoln did not remain vacant long. Bloet died on January 10; his successor, Alexander, received his official nomination at the following Easter, and was consecrated on July 22. He owed his elevation to his paternal uncle, Roger, bishop of Salisbury, the most powerful man in the realm after the king. When Bloet fell from his horse a dying man, Roger was riding on the other side of the king,

and seized the opportunity to obtain a promise of the vacant see for his nephew. He was adopted by his uncle, together with his cousin Nigel, afterwards Bishop of Ely, and brought up by him in the utmost luxury at his court, where he acquired the pride of place and love of lavish display which he showed through life. In 1121 his uncle appointed him Archdeacon of Sarum, and two years later he secured his elevation to the episcopate. The gatehouse of Eastgate, in Lincoln, with the tower over it, was granted to him as a residence by Henry.¹ In 1125 he accompanied the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to Rome, probably to receive investiture from the pope. Then was that visit, so important in its results, when Archbishop William, in order to render the superiority of Canterbury to York unquestionable, secured for himself legatine authority, *i. e.* "the visitational authority of the see of Rome, which forced the king to admit the supreme jurisdiction of the pope, and gave the ordinary metropolitan jurisdiction the appearance of a delegated authority from Rome."² From this visit, writes Dr. Inett, "we are to date the vassalage of the Church of England." After his return home we find him present at the Council of Westminster in 1127, when the sentence of deprivation was passed on all married parish priests. The decree, renewed in 1129, was rendered ineffective by the king's connivance at clerical matrimony, unwilling that "the good old customs of England should be changed." As one of the chief

¹ Dugdale, vol. viii., p. 1274.

² Bishop Stubbs' *Constitutional History*, vol. iii., p. 299.

prelates of the realm, Alexander took part in the grand ceremonial of the consecration of the newly-erected "glorious choir of Conrad" at Canterbury Cathedral, which had taken the place of the smaller and plainer choir of Lanfranc's church, May 4, 1130.

Alexander, like his great-uncle Roger, affords a characteristic example of the secular type of ecclesiastics, rather a temporal potentate than a spiritual father. Holding their lands by military tenure, surrounding themselves with a retinue of knights and armed men, builders and fortifiers of castles, and themselves, as we have seen Bloet did, going forth to battle and siege, they differed little from barons save in their spiritual powers and clerical immunities, by which the greatness of their position was largely augmented, and a celibacy which was too usually merely nominal. We have a graphic picture of Alexander and his cousin Nigel of Ely, from the pen of a contemporary writer—"They were called bishops, but they were men given up to pomp and display, audaciously presuming to meddle with things they ought not to have ventured to touch; giving little heed to the pure and simple conversation belonging to Church religion, they so devoted themselves to the military life and the world's pomp, that when they came to court all men marvelled at them for the crowd of men-at arms who attended them."¹ Vast as were the revenues which Alexander drew from his episcopal estates and jurisdictions, they were inadequate to his profuse expenditure, and he is charged with abusing his power to extort money to maintain his state. Henry

¹ *Gesta Stephani*, p. 47.

of Huntingdon, writing after the death of the patron to whom he had dedicated his history, in which he had eulogized him as "the father of his country, the very flower and crown of the kingdom and nation," brings the charge that "through his desire to surpass all other nobles in the magnificence of his gifts and the splendour of his designs, when his private resources proved inadequate he pillaged his own tenants to bring up his more slender means to a level with these opulences. But in this he failed, for he was one whose extravagance knew no bounds, and he was ever squandering more and more."¹ One considerable item of his expenditure was the erection of castles.

The reign of Henry I. was the great epoch of castle-building. "No great baron was without a castle on each of his principal estates, nor was any bishop secure of his personal safety - except so provided."² Alexander's uncle, Roger of Salisbury, was the greatest castle-builder in the realm, nor was his nephew slow to follow his example. On each of his chief manors, Newark, Sleaford, and Banbury, he erected strong stone castles, on the not altogether groundless plea that such fortresses were essential for the protection and dignity of his see.³ But Alexander's building works were not entirely military. Ecclesiastical foundations were not altogether neglected. When the tide of fortune was turning, and he was given to understand, as William of Newbury has reported, "that that sort of building did not altogether befit the

¹ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 280.

² Clark, *Military Architecture*, vol. i., p. 48.

³ William of Malmesbury, *Historiæ Novellæ*, vol. ii., p. 102,

episcopal character, as it were to expiate his error, he began to build religious houses, erecting as many monasteries as he had erected castles, and filling them with religious men." The earliest of these houses was the Cistercian monastery of Haverholm (the Oat Island), near Sleaford, founded in 1137, and when the low and swampy site had proved distasteful to the brethren, transferred in 1139 to Louth Park. Haverholm was then made over to the newly-founded order of the Gilbertines of Sempringham, by whom the monastery was completed. In 1138 Alexander founded a second Cistercian house at Thame in Oxfordshire, and in 1140 he planted a colony of Austin canons in the deserted seat of the bishopric at Dorchester on Thames. Nor were his religious works limited to the establishment of new foundations. The church of St. Mary's at Stow, from which his predecessor Bloet had removed the monastic body to Eynsham, received the care due to so venerable a memorial of the early days of the see. Remigius had rebuilt the still existing nave. Alexander added a new chancel, vaulting it with stone, as we now see it, in the best style of the day. Stow probably, and Dorchester certainly, had each in its turn been the "bishop's church." That dignity now belonged to the church of St. Mary at Lincoln. The cathedral suffered in 1142 from one of those accidental conflagrations which few of our great Norman churches escaped, when the mid alley was covered by a flat ceiling of painted boards. The roof was burnt off, and only the bare walls remained. Alexander undertook the work of restoration, which we are told was

carried out "with such wonderful skill that it was more beautiful than before, and second to none in the realm." To guard against a second conflagration, he covered the whole church with a stone vault, one of the earliest examples in England of what had long been common on the other side of the Channel. The architectural character of the three elaborately sculptured recessed western portals, and the lower portions of the western towers, with their richly arcaded gables, proves that they belong to the same epoch, and were probably the work of the same hand. We have no documentary evidence of these being the work of Alexander, for though Alexander's was the moving mind, the cost of these "works of satisfaction," according to Giraldus, was not borne by him, but was provided for out of the revenues of the Church. Thus he "robbed one altar to clothe another," and deprived himself of all the merit which might otherwise have accrued to him.

We must turn now to the political side of Alexander's career. The chief crisis occurred in 1139, in the early years of Stephen's troubled reign. The oath of fealty to his daughter, the Empress Maud, imposed by Henry I. on the bishops and chief lords of the realm at the Westminster Council, 1126-7, had been taken by Alexander and his uncle Roger, and they had again and again renewed the pledge that on his death without a male heir they would recognize her as "lady of England and Normandy." These oaths were speedily broken, and Stephen, the chosen of the men of London, accepted as sovereign. Though at first trusted by Stephen, and accompanying him

when he crossed in 1137 to defend his duchy against Geoffrey of Anjou, Alexander's loyalty, as well as that of his uncle Roger and cousin Nigel, became suspected. The king's suspicions were fomented by his lay advisers, jealous of the power of these haughty Churchmen, possessors of so many castles. This was the crisis of Stephen's reign. The Church, which had virtually set him on the throne, in the troubles which were already becoming formidable, had up to this time remained true to Stephen. But, weak and impulsive, by an act of almost incredible rashness, he forfeited her allegiance, and drove her powerful leaders into open revolt. At the Council of Oxford, in 1139, he suddenly arrested Alexander, and his still more mighty uncle Roger, the justiciar,—his cousin Nigel of Ely managing to escape,—and demanded the surrender of their castles as the price of their liberty. To hasten compliance, the powerful engine of starvation was brought into play. Roger's castle of Devizes was reluctantly yielded to Stephen, who dragged Alexander across England to Newark, with the threat, which proved no empty one, that he should not taste of food until his newly-built castle, the strong walls of which still dominate the Trent, was given into his hands. The fall of Newark was speedily followed by that of Sleaford and of Banbury. All his castles were now gone, and Alexander had only his manor-houses, such as Stow and Woburn, and the Eastgate Tower at Lincoln, left. From this point Stephen's fortunes steadily declined. The barons were standing aloof; the people had learnt that his promises were not to be trusted; and now he had alienated the clergy. Three months after the arrest

at Oxford the Empress landed, and received a hearty welcome from the representatives of both Church and State, who as yet knew her not. We do not find Alexander openly espousing either side. He had learnt a severe lesson, and perhaps thought it wiser to remain quiet. We only hope that his diocese was the gainer, and that he gave heed to the words of the Council held at this time, that "bishops should not possess castles, but devote themselves to the spiritual care of their flocks."¹

Two years later Alexander saw the tables turned. On Candlemas Day, 1141, his captor was taken captive on the battle-field beneath Lincoln hill, and carried off as a prisoner, as he himself had been, from one side of England to the other, and safely lodged in Bristol Castle. At the solemn mass in the minster which preceded the engagement, at which Stephen was a worshipper and Alexander the celebrant, startling omens portended the coming overthrow. The huge waxen taper, "*cereum rege dignum*," offered by the king broke in two as he placed it in the bishop's hand. The chain by which the pyx, containing the reserved sacrament, hung over the altar, suddenly snapped asunder, and the wafer fell to the ground. The significance was plain. The king had profaned the House of God by using it as a fortress, erecting his engines of war against the castle then held by the rebel earls of Lincoln and Chester on its very parapets, and the House of God rejected him and his offerings. What wonder then that the day ended in signal disaster—Stephen himself taken prisoner, the town sacked,

¹ Florence of Worcester, vol. iii., p. 116.

and its inhabitants mercilessly slaughtered ! Alexander must have been more than human if he did not recognize the vengeance of God on one who had sacrilegiously dared to stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed priests.

A month later he was at Winchester, taking part in the solemn reception in that cathedral of the empress by the legate, Henry of Blois, Stephen's own brother, alienated by his daring impiety ; and in the synod which followed, by which Maud was elected "Lady of England," he swore allegiance to her, having, it is said, previously obtained Stephen's permission to bend to the times, and make a virtue of necessity.¹ A terrible accusation is brought against Alexander and some other bishops by the author of the *Gesta Stephani*, of having aggravated the miseries of the days of anarchy which followed, when, as the chronicler groans out, "the land was all foredoomed, and men said openly that Christ and His saints slept," and "not only by winking at the acts of cruelty and rapacity of the barons and their retainers, which were turning the land into a hell, fearing to strike with the word of God those sons of Belial, but even by imitating their evil deeds in extorting money by torture and imprisonment."²

In 1145 Alexander paid a second visit to Rome, where he was received with the utmost honour by the pope, Eugenius III., the friend of St. Bernard, and his whole court, among whom he lavished his money with a profusion that recalled the title he had gained on

¹ William of Malmesbury, *Historie Novelle*, vol. ii., p. 105.

² *Gesta Stephani*, p. 99.

his former visit of "the Magnificent." He prolonged his stay till the following year, when he returned home, leaving grateful memories of so open-handed a guest.¹

During his absence the conflagration of the minster had occurred which has been already mentioned. At the close of 1146, Stephen having at last got the Earl of Chester into his hands by treachery, and obtained tardy possession of the castle of Lincoln as the price of his enlargement from prison, feeling once more a king in fact, kept his Christmas feast at Lincoln, and in defiance of the old prophecy, threatening disaster to any monarch who should presume to do so, wore his crown within its walls. We have no details of the ceremony, but we can hardly be wrong in placing the religious solemnities which accompanied it within the walls of the renovated cathedral, and assigning the chief duty to Alexander.

The bishop's career was now nearly at an end. The summer of the following year he journeyed to Auxerre to visit Pope Eugenius, who was then sojourning there. He was again honourably received by the pope, but his health suffered from the excessive heat of the season, and on his return to England he brought with him the seeds of a low fever, which proved fatal on Feb. 20 in the next year, 1148. He was buried in the north-eastern transept of his cathedral church, on Ash Wednesday. The monumental stones which marked his grave, and those of his predecessor and immediate successors, shared the fate of the memorial slabs generally at the repairing of the minster in the latter

¹ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 278.

part of the last century, and the exact spot of his sepulchre is unknown.

A letter written to him by St. Bernard on the occasion of one of the canons of his cathedral, Philip by name, embracing the Cistercian order at Clairvaux, in which he warns him "not to lose the lasting glory of the next world for the sake of the transient glory of a world of shadows, nor to love his possessions more than his true self, lest he thereby lose both," shows how truly the saint gauged the worldliness of his character. Alexander's relatives profited by his episcopal patronage. His brother David received the archdeaconry of Buckingham, and his nephew William that of Northampton. The last-named seems to have been his uncle's executor, as by him were handed over to the dean and chapter the books he had bequeathed to them, which are particularized in the catalogue prefixed to the grand MS. Vulgate, which was the nucleus of the Cathedral library.

Of the condition of the diocese during those terrible nineteen years of anarchy we have no details, but a time of civil and social chaos, when excommunication had lost its power to alarm; when the reverence for holy places and holy things had almost become extinct, and churches and religious houses were violently seized and turned into freebooters' castles; when men feared to leave their homes on necessary business, lest they should be taken by the banditti, who, like ravenous birds watching for their prey, swooped down on the wayfarers, and carried them off to some stronghold, to be tortured till they had rendered up their uttermost farthing, and not even bishops or religious

men could pass from one town to another in safety ; when every one was raising his head against his fellow, and discord was laying waste all things both high and low ; when there were robbery and spoliation everywhere—the strong crushing the weak, stifling their complaints with threats, and handing over to death any who dared to resist ; when the king was powerless, and the law weak because of the king's powerlessness, and, as in the early days of Israel, "every one did that which was right in his own eyes," the work of the Church was everywhere paralyzed, and the clergy, too readily following the example of their spiritual superiors, suffered from a general demoralization.

The episcopate of Alexander witnessed the foundation of six Cistercian houses—Swineshead, 1134 ; Haverholme, 1139 (transferred to Louth, 1139) ; Kirkstead, 1142 ; Revesby, 1142 ; Vaudey, 1147 ; and the nunnery of Stixwold, the precise date of which is uncertain. Houses of Austin Canons were also founded at Bourne, *c.* 1138, Thornton Curtis, 1139, and at Nocton and Thornholme. The first Premonstratensian house founded in England was that of Newhouse, *c.* 1143, followed by that of Barlings under the next bishop in 1154. Under Alexander, and favoured with his patronage, the Gilbertine Order—remarkable as being the only monastic order having its origin in England—was founded by St. Gilbert of Sempringham, at that place, *c.* 1139. The Cistercian house of Haverholme became Gilbertine in that year, and was succeeded by Sixhills and Ballington, and perhaps Alvington, and the nunneries of Caltley, Tunstall, and Nunsormsby in Stephen's reign,

St. Catherine's, Lincoln, speedily rose under Bishop Chesney, 1148, and Newstead or Anxholme shortly afterwards.

After Alexander's death the see remained vacant for ten months. His successor was consecrated on Dec. 19 of the same year. The new bishop was Robert de Chesney, in Latin "de Querceto" of the Oak Wood. His name shows that though by accident of birth he was an Englishman, he was of Norman parentage. Of his early life we are ignorant ; we only know that he had held one of the archdeaconries of the diocese, that of Leicester, and, as his contemporary, Henry of Huntingdon, tells us, with great credit. He was still a young man when he was unanimously elected bishop by the chapter of Lincoln, the king (Stephen, who it would appear had not interfered with the election), the clergy, and commonalty all accepting the choice with the greatest joy, every one agreeing that he was well worthy of so great an honour.¹ As archdeacon he had gained a reputation for great simplicity and humility of character, and his first arrival at his episcopal city was anticipated with great eagerness by all classes, "who having expected much in their new bishop, found him exceed their expectations."² This was at the outset of his episcopal career. As time went on, it was seen that Chesney, who was evidently a peace-loving, unambitious man, lacked the strength of character and practical wisdom necessary for one who from his position was forced to take part in a critical epoch. Alan, Becket's biographer, while

¹ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 281.

² *Ibid*,

praising his simplicity, speaks very slightly of his judgment, "*simplex quidem homo et minus discretus.*"¹ He was also charged with undue regard to his relatives, bestowing some of the episcopal estates on his nieces as marriage portions, and in other ways impoverishing the see. Though no part of the episcopal palace at Lincoln is of his date, he conferred a great benefit on his successors by securing from Henry II. a confirmation of the previous grants of the site, and in making costly preparations for the building. He also purchased the original house of the Templars, "the old Temple," in Holborn, as a London residence for the bishops of Lincoln. By these and other costly works he contracted a large debt with Aaron, the Jew of Lincoln, the Rothschild of his age, which he charged on the see, the "ornaments" of the cathedral being pledged to the unbeliever, to the great scandal of the Church. But the greatest injury to the see during his episcopate was his concession of the claim of the great abbey of St. Albans of independence of the bishops of Lincoln. In this, however, he was hardly to blame; the struggle was altogether an unequal one. The Abbot of St. Albans, Robert of Gorham, was much more than a match for Chesney, and the matter had been already virtually decided by two successive popes, who were courted and bribed by the abbot. Chesney might have carried on the struggle more energetically, but no efforts of his could have changed the result, which was formally settled at the Council of Westminster, in March

¹ Gervase, vol. i., p. 183.

1163.¹ The village of Tinguhurst in Buckinghamshire was accepted by him by way of compensation. In the great struggle between Henry and Becket, the part taken by Chesney was in harmony with his simple, peace-loving character. At the outbreak of the dispute he, with Roger of York, as the most pliable of the bishops, was summoned by Henry to Gloucester, and persuaded to desert the archbishop and attach themselves to the interests of the king. At the great crisis of the struggle, at the Council of Northampton, in October 1164, his almost childish simplicity was clearly shown. His advice was for unqualified submission. "It is plain," he said, "that this man must either resign his archbishopric or his life, and if he loses his life I don't see what good his archbishopric is to do him." When pleading with Becket to throw himself on the king's mercy, Fitz-Stephen tells us, his only argument was "the silent eloquence of tears."² According to the annals of Worcester Abbey, Chesney was one of the envoys despatched by Henry immediately after Becket's flight to carry his despatches to the pope at Sens, charging Becket with traitorous conduct.³ This is, however, doubtful. Chesney did not live to witness the tragical end of the long and bitter conflict. This "man of great humility passed to the

¹ A very interesting and minute account of the struggle between the bishop and the abbot is given by Matthew Paris in his history of St. Albans.

² *Materials for the Life of Becket* (Rolls Series), ii. 327 ; iii. 65 ; iv. 30, 206 ; v. 72.

³ *Annal. Monast.* (Rolls Series), vol. iv., p. 381.

Lord," Dec. 27, 1166,¹ and was buried by the side of Alexander in the north wing of the eastern transept of the cathedral. Chesney took under his protection the now populous Order of Sempringham, and founded the Gilbertine house of St. Catherine's, outside the South Bargate of Lincoln, endowing it among other grants with the prebend of Canwick and four of the manor churches of the see, "to the grievous prejudice," it is said, of his successors and their chaplains, who had usually held these benefices. According to Giraldus, he compensated the church of Lincoln for the loss of the prebend of Canwick by the gift of another, which, however, he does not specify.²

¹ Giraldus Cambrensis, vol. vii., pp. 36, 164.

² At this point the work of Precentor Venables terminates.

CHAPTER IV

THE INTERREGNUM : ST. HUGH OF AVALON

AFTER the death of Bishop Robert de Chesney the diocese of Lincoln had to face a somewhat bitter experience. It was kept without a chief pastor for nearly seventeen years. The king, embittered by his long contest with Archbishop Becket and pressed for money for his wars, took advantage of a supposed right of the sovereign to confiscate the revenues of a vacant benefice for his use, and made an unscrupulous appropriation of the revenues of Lincoln. The evil days of William Rufus and Ralph Flambard were revived. Both Henry I. and Stephen had expressly renounced in their charters the right of the Crown to seize the revenues of a vacant see, but unfortunately the Constitutions of Clarendon (1160) had recognized this as one of the *avite consuetudines* of the land. The Constitution ran as follows—"When an archbishopric or a bishopric shall have become vacant, or an abbey or a priory in the lordship of the king, it ought to be in his hands, and he shall receive from it all the rents and outcomings as though they were of his lordship."¹

¹ Stubbs, *Select Charters*, p. 97.

Grounding himself upon this, which in reality was altogether a mis-statement of the ancient custom of the land, Henry, for six years, did not make even a semblance of filling up the see of Lincoln. But the tide of ecclesiastical feeling was fast rising. The murder of Becket had given an enormous access of strength to the Church. The king's son, in conjunction with the King of France, threatened danger, and Henry must at any cost have the Church on his side, if he was not altogether to succumb. Accordingly, in 1172, the king nominated prelates for election to the sees of Bath, Winchester, Hereford, Ely, and Chichester, but for Lincoln, whose rich revenues he could not willingly abandon, he devised another plan. To this see he nominated his natural son Geoffrey, then under twenty-one years of age, with no intention that he should proceed to consecration, but that he might act as nominal head of the diocese and receive the temporalities for his father's use. This youth was already in deacon's orders, and held the post of Archdeacon of Lincoln. In spite of the assertion of Giraldus that he had studied theology and had "great fitness" for the clerical office, it is evident that he differed but little from a layman and soldier, and the assertion that he was freely elected to the see of Lincoln is an unnecessary slander on the Chapter of those days. The king having procured the election of Geoffrey, the next step was to obtain his confirmation by the pope, but this was not so easy a matter. Henry, the son of the king, strongly opposed it, and Pope Alexander was afraid to yield. For some years the confirmation was withheld, and it

was not till the quarrel between father and son was settled, in the year 1175, that the pope's confirmation reached the King of England. Then the father suddenly discovered that the son was too young to be consecrated. As reported by the Abbot Benedictus, the king said—"He had not reached the year of the fitting age, and knew not how much was necessary to the right administration of the episcopal office when conferred upon any."¹ In order to make a semblance of preparing him for the high office of bishop, Geoffrey was despatched to Tours, that he might, as was alleged, study there in the schools, but in reality to occupy himself in military matters, or in such amusements as he found most to his taste. "He was well contented," says William of Newbury, "with his very ample income, which allowed him full scope for all his pleasures, and was in no hurry for canonical consecration, knowing better how to fleece the sheep of the Lord than to feed them."² This state of things continued for some five or six years until the pope's patience was fairly exhausted. He wrote severely to Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury (1181), that without any delay or excuse, he should compel by ecclesiastical censures, Geoffrey, the elect of Lincoln, son of the King of England, to resign his rights to the see, or without further delay to receive the order of priest, and the dignity of the episcopal office. The young elect thus brought to a point took a very wise and creditable resolve. After consultation with his father he wrote to the archbishop as follows—"It has pleased

¹ Benedictus, *S.A.*, 1175.

² William of Newbury, vol. ii., p. 22.

his apostolical majesty to enjoin your holiness that you should call upon me at a fixed time to undertake the order of the priesthood and the dignity of a bishop. I, however, considering that many bishops of maturer years and greater wisdom than I can boast, are scarce equal to the charge of such an office, and cannot perform the duties of it without peril to souls, fear to impose on my youth this burden, too heavy even for those much older; and this I do not from any levity of mind, but out of reverence to the sacrament of orders. Having therefore consulted with my father, my brothers, and several bishops, I have otherwise disposed of my life and condition, wishing to serve in war for a time under the command of my father, and to abstain from episcopal matters. I therefore resign all my right of election and the Bishopric of Lincoln, spontaneously, freely, and entirely into your hands, holy father, craving of you absolution both from my election and my claim to the see, being as you are my metropolitan, and the special delegate of the apostolical see in this matter.”¹ A similar letter he also wrote to the Chapter of Lincoln, and thus quitted with a certain amount of decency the anomalous position into which his father’s greed and his own too ready compliance had brought him. We are not here concerned with the stormy scenes and the great scandals which belong to Geoffrey’s after life as Archbishop of York. They will be found fully narrated in Mr. Raine’s valuable *Lives of the Archbishops*. Geoffrey will meet us once again in the ‘Life of St. Hugh.’ His nominal episcopate was not without some boons

¹ Benedictus, *S.A.*, 1181.

to the church of Lincoln, though these little compensated for the absolute cessation of episcopal government for so long a period. He paid off the sum of £300 due to Aaron the Jew, which had been borrowed by Bishop Robert de Chesney for building purposes; and for which he had pledged the *ornamenta* of the Church. He is also said to have expended large sums on the adornments of the church, among other things giving it two fine bells; and to have recovered some estates for the Chapter. But the chief merits of Geoffrey were certainly not of an ecclesiastical character, but were rather his loyal adherence to his father, when his legitimate brothers so bitterly opposed him, and the successful wars in which he contended for his interests.¹

After the resignation of Geoffrey, the diocese of Lincoln had still some time to wait before being provided with a head. Geoffrey resigned January 6, 1182, and it was not till the third Sunday after Easter, May 8, 1183, that his successor was elected. The person selected was Walter de Coutances, Archdeacon of Oxford, a clerk employed in the secular business of the king. And here a curious conflict of testimony comes in between Giraldus and Benedictus the Abbot of Peterborough, whose historical correctness stands high. Giraldus says that it was by the king's management (*rege procurante*) that Walter was elected bishop. Benedictus, on the contrary, says that the king was very angry at having to lose a useful servant, and utterly refused to give his assent to the election, till, humbled by the sudden death of his son Henry, he

¹ Giraldus Cambrensis, vol vii., p. 36.

would no longer oppose the wishes of the Church. Walter de Coutances, the elect, was probably of Norman descent, but Giraldus strangely asserts that he was of British blood, born in Cornwall, and descended from the stock of Corineus, a noble Trojan. He calls him a man. "affable and liberal, deeply learned in letters, and very prudent and discreet in secular business." Walter was ordained priest by John, Bishop of Evreux (June 11), and after a few weeks (July 3) was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln at Angers, in the church of St. Laudus, by Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury, and assistant bishops. On the third Sunday in Advent (Dec. 11) he was enthroned in Lincoln. The Abbot Benedictus says that the joy of the people was great. "Both clergy and people exulted and sang hymns and canticles."¹

But their rejoicing over their new bishop was destined to be very short-lived. In a year's time, before he could have become at all acquainted with the great diocese of Lincoln, Walter was translated to Rouen, being enthroned there February 24, 1185. Giraldus has found much fault with him for confirming the grants of the churches which his predecessor had made to the Order of Sempringham. This Order, founded in 1139 at Sempringham, had now several houses in the diocese, amongst others the Priory of St. Catherine's, just outside Lincoln. It was remarkable for the union of monks and nuns in separate parts of the same establishment; but in spite of all precautions it did not fail to obtain somewhat of a bad reputation. Warton quotes a MS. from the Harleian Collection

¹ Benedictus Abbas, *S. A.*, p. 1183.

which ranks Sempringham as amongst the most luxurious houses in England. It is, perhaps, principally famous for having produced Robert de Brune, the Lincolnshire poet of the thirteenth century, of whom we shall have to speak hereafter.

Bishop Walter has been much blamed by William of Newbury for having taken the archbishopric of Rouen in place of the bishopric of Lincoln. The revenues of the latter, he says, were far greater than those of the former. This hardly constituted a moral offence, though the fickleness which again deprived Lincoln of a head, in deference probably to the king's wishes, may need some excuse.¹

After the cession of Bishop Walter, the canons of Lincoln naturally desired that the vacant see should be filled as quickly as possible. But there was considerable delay. During the year 1186 they nominated to the king, Godfrey de Lacy, Richard Fitz-Neal, and Herbert le Poor, but none of these were acceptable to Henry. The king had had too much trouble with proud and powerful secular Churchmen to wish to have any more of that description in the high places of the Church, and he resolutely refused to accept the elections. Henry then bethought him of bringing to this important post a man of quite a different character. Not many years before he had brought to his priory of Witham, in the Forest of Selwood, a Carthusian monk of the Grande Chartreuse, whose services he had obtained with the greatest difficulty, on account of the high estimation in which he was held. This man, coming to the miserably dilapidated

¹ William of Newbury, Bk. III., ch. i.

and decaying house in Somersetshire, which was starved by the niggardliness of its founder, had raised and strengthened it, and extorted from its nominal patron substantial help. Henry had been struck with the power of the man, and had often held converse with him during his hunting visits to Selwood. He perhaps thought it would be accounted a real merit to him to have promoted such a devout servant of God, and, it may be, thought also that the revenues of the see would not have a very watchful or careful guardian in one whose asceticism was so real and pronounced as that of the Burgundian Hugh. A Carthusian monk, ignorant of English ways and English tongue, must needs, he thought, lean entirely upon his patron, and be quite subservient to the royal will; or, it may be, as several of the chroniclers suggest, that by the appointment of a good man he desired to compensate the see of Lincoln for the many injuries he had done to it. But whatever were the king's motives in making the appointment, it was an intense surprise to the proud and wealthy canons of Lincoln. When first apprised of the king's intentions, they received the news with scornful laughter (*non sine derisionis cachinno*). They were, however, speedily made to know that this was the king's will, and a matter not to be trifled with, and thus, though excessively disliking the task, they elected Hugh Prior of Witham to the see. Meantime the good Carthusian in his sequestered monastery knew nothing of the matter, and had not been consulted as to his willingness to undertake the office. It was assumed as a matter of course that he would at once yield to the king's will,

and accept the election of the canons. But they little knew the strong and fearless character of the man. When he was informed of his election, he simply repudiated it. An election by constraint and at the command of the king, was in his view no valid title to the episcopate. Let the canons meet in their cathedral church, and after the Mass of the Holy Ghost choose the man whom they held to be the most fitted for the high office, and then, if the choice fell upon him, he might be inclined to consider it. The response was received by these great Churchmen with the greatest satisfaction. They were highly delighted at the proud indifference to the commands of the king shown by this lowly monk, and doubtless thought that they had found in him another Thomas Becket, who would contend vigorously for the rights of the Church against lay interference. They met therefore in their Chapter, and unanimously elected Hugh as their bishop. But all was not yet accomplished. Hugh declared that he could not accept the office except by the consent of the head of his Order, the prior of the Grande Chartreuse. There was perhaps in this somewhat of monastic pride, but it was necessary to comply with his demands. The King of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the electing Chapter had to unite in a humble request to the prior of the Alpine monastery to allow them to promote one of his children to one of the most important posts in the English Church. The request was granted, and Hugh, at length satisfied, began to prepare himself by devout spiritual exercises for the onerous responsibility of the episcopate.

While he is thus occupied, we may take a glance at the state of the clergy at this period. Giraldus Cambrensis, a clever but not altogether trustworthy writer, who had resided several years at Lincoln, has left us in his *Gemma Ecclesiastica* a lively sketch of the ecclesiastics of his time. According to him, they were constantly guilty of the greatest irreverence even in the most holy service which they had to perform—the Holy Eucharist. From this they were frequently endeavouring to extract gain for themselves. Thus, as it was the habit to make an offering at the Gospel, the priest would often recite several Gospels, choosing those which he thought would be the most pleasing to the congregation, as, for instance, the Gospel for the Epiphany when he saw soldiers present. Another plan was to begin a Mass and say it down to the offertory. Then to begin another and say it down to the same point, and then another, as long as the congregation could be got to offer. Priests were wont to say Masses many times in a day, thus offending against the canons. The first offertory it would seem was claimed by monks if any were present in the church, and the officiating priest would caution the worshippers present against offering, begging them to reserve their offerings for a second offertory, when they would be his. It was customary for the priest to enjoin those who had lost a friend to pay money for a Tricenary or series of Masses for thirty days. Then the priest, undertaking for several persons to say a Tricenary, but making one Mass do for all, would gain considerable profit. Persons, still alive, were encouraged to institute *anniversaries* for themselves,

and to have the Mass for the Dead celebrated. But far worse than any of these irregularities was the practice with which Giraldus charges the clergy, of using the Holy Sacrament for the purposes of magic, celebrating it over waxen images, with imprecations devoting some one to death. Priests, he says, were worse than Judas, for he, believing Jesus to be a mere man, sold Him for thirty pieces of silver; they, believing Him to be both God and man, sell Him for a penny. Nor, according to Giraldus, were the clergy more regular in their lives than in the performance of their clerical duties. They almost all had *focariae*, and they were wont to dress up these ladies in the finest clothes, sometimes attending them as they rode upon their palfreys in the humble guise of footmen. Then the children must be smartly decked, and the house handsomely furnished. As to the knowledge of the clergy, Giraldus is intensely severe. One man confounds Barnabas with Barabbas; another thinks that a Canaanitish woman must be partly a dog (*canis*); another is under the impression that the Jude coupled with St. Simon in the Festival is Judas Iscariot. The *Pisces assos* of the Vulgate is explained to be "ass-fish." The *Pruna* to mean "plums." St. John, *ante portam Latinam*, is supposed to be an assertion that St. John "first brought Latin into the country." *His opus habet*, that "the Lord hath hyssop." From the words "fornicators and adulterers God will judge," a priest argues that no others are to be judged. And this ignorance is said not to be confined to the lower clergy, but to be found also among bishops and abbots. Passing from Giraldus to

William of Newbury, a chronicler of that era, who is held by the best authorities to be a veracious writer, we are told that discipline was almost completely in abeyance, that more than a hundred homicides committed by clerical offenders had been left unpunished, because the bishops only cared to defend clerical immunities, and were occupied in their own ambitious pursuits without regard to the discipline of their clergy. The same melancholy view of the ecclesiastical state of this period may be gathered from the satires of Walter Mapes, and the invective of Nigel Wireker, a monk of Canterbury, who is described by Bishop Stubbs as a "sincere and by no means prejudiced monk." He says with reference to what Nigel writes—"The following of secular pursuits by the superior clergy had the double effect of laying open the spiritual offices to unworthy persons, and of perverting religious endowments to merely secular uses. Immorality and simony were crying sins in the portion of the clergy that was supposed to be devoted to spiritual duties, and these were rather encouraged than restrained by their poverty. The superior clergy were generally free from these stains, but ignorance, meanness, avarice, and servility were common among them."¹ It will be seen therefore that Hugh, called to preside over a huge diocese in these undisciplined times, had no small or easy task before him.

At the end of three months after his election, Hugh proceeded to London to receive consecration from the archbishop. On the journey he preserved his monkish garb and habits, much to the annoyance of

¹ *Introduction to Epistolæ Cantuarienses*, p. cxvii.

the well-appointed clerics who accompanied him. On St. Matthew's Day (Sept. 21, 1186) he was consecrated at Westminster in St. Catherine's chapel—the chapel of the sick monks—by Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his suffragans. On September 29 he reached Lincoln. Passing the night before his installation at St. Catherine's monastery outside Lincoln, he went the next day to the cathedral, walking barefoot, and was enthroned by Herbert, Archdeacon of Canterbury. The usual fee for the installation was the horse ridden by the bishop, and the cope used by him in the procession. Hugh had no horse, and probably no cope, and he scornfully rejected the claim of the archdeacon. But that he was not of a niggard spirit was quickly shown, when, to the amazement of his steward, he ordered three hundred of his deer in Stow Park to be slaughtered to feast the poor. His first act was to publish certain *Decreta* designed to remedy some of the abuses most rampant among the clergy.

“ 1. That nothing be given or received for administering or hastening the administration of justice.

2. That nothing should be given or exacted of the priest-vicars for their office.

3. That the archdeacons and their officials should not presume to fine any church or any individual without regular trial.

4. That no layman, or any other person not a priest, should have the celebration of masses inflicted on him as a penance.

5. That no annuals or tricennials or any other settled masses should be celebrated for temporal gain.

6. That no one be admitted to the priestly office unless it shall have been proved that he was ordained canonically by the Archbishop of Canterbury, or one of his suffragans.

7. That all who hold benefices should have the tonsure.

8. That no clerk sue another clerk in a secular court for matters ecclesiastical.”¹

The bishop also addressed letters to his archdeacons and to the Dean and Chapter, bidding the first to encourage processions, and the latter to enforce the appointment of vicars by the non-resident canons.

The bishop at once exhibited a practical mind, and, as the writer of his life tells us, was wont to discourage stories of miracles. To him, he said, the holiness of the saints was a sufficient miracle, and that thought ever present to his mind of the stupendous multitude and infinite greatness of the Creator's works. Retiring after his enthronization to his manor of Stow, Hugh at once made acquaintance with the famous swan which so constantly accompanies all representations of him. This was a wild swan of marvellous size and strength, which, after killing or driving away all the tame swans from the lakes about the manor, was brought to the bishop, and at once attached itself to him in a most singular way. We need not here repeat all the strange stories collected by Giraldus and the writer of the *Magna Vita* as to this marvellous bird, which always seemed to know when the bishop was about to return to Stow, and would let no one keep him from greeting the prelate, or take food from

¹ Benedictus Abbas, *S. A.*, 1186.

any other hand. On entering on his diocesan work, Hugh had the great difficulty to contend with of his ignorance of the language and dialect of his people. Probably during his residence at Witham he may have acquired some knowledge of the English tongue, but he was unable to understand the quaint dialects which he met with, and was obliged to call in the aid of the local clergy.¹ The customs and habits of the people were in the same way unknown to him.

Thus we find him writing to Archbishop Baldwin—"I thank God that to will is present with me, but how to perform that which I will, I find not. Not only in myself I am unable, but I know not where to look for help. I am a foreigner, without knowledge of the natives of the land, ignorant in what they excel, and what are their favourite pursuits and studies. You, on the contrary, are well experienced in all this as one born among them, and for many years in office over them. I appeal to you not only for myself, but as a matter personal to you, inasmuch as you are responsible for putting me into this office, to give me as assistants some men whom you yourself have well proved, and who have had you for their example, to share with me the labours and cares of the pastoral office."²

The archbishop, in reply to this appeal, sent to Bishop Hugh two of his clerks, Robert of Bedford, and Roger of Roldeston, both of whom were valuable helpers to him. Roger became Dean of Lincoln in 1195, so that with him the bishop must have been

¹ *Magna Vita S. Hugonis*, p. 97; *Magna Vita*, p. 268,

² *Magna Vita*, p. 125.

closely connected in the great work of the building of the cathedral. The bishop's reputation soon attracted other important persons around him. His canons, as we have seen, were men of weight, but with them, as he tells us, he always got on most pleasantly; and though, according to his own description, his temper was "as hot as pepper," never had any dispute or difficulty with them. Probably they soon got to know that he was a man not easily to be daunted—a knowledge which the Chief Forester had to acquire in somewhat an unpleasant way, and which was then to be impressed on the mind of the king himself. Under the cruel and tyrannical forest laws which were the delight of the Plantagenet kings, the king's Chief Forester was a man of huge importance, and the terror of the people. The office was then held by Hugh de Neville, who had committed some act of tyranny, for which the bishop, hearing of it, immediately excommunicated him. The king was furious, but wishing to allow the bishop to atone for his rashness by performing a conciliatory act, he sent to request the appointment of a vacant prebend to be assigned to one of his courtiers. Hugh's answer ran as follows—"Ecclesiastical benefices are not for courtiers, but for ecclesiastics. Those who hold them must serve not the palace or the treasury, but the altar. The king has wherewithal to compensate those who work for him and fight his battles. Let him allow those who serve the King of kings to enjoy their fitting remuneration, and not to be deprived of it."¹

Exasperated beyond measure by this reply, Henry

¹ *Magna Vita*, p. 126.

sent to summon the bishop to his presence. He was at Woodstock; the bishop at Eynsham Abbey. Hugh on his arrival found the king seated among his courtiers in a glade in Woodstock Forest. He was received in ominous silence. The king, affecting to take no notice of him, occupied himself in stitching up a rent in his glove. The bishop, not the least embarrassed, said in a jocular tone—"How like you are now to your cousins at Falaise." The king, struck with astonishment at his boldness, and then taking in the joke, burst into a loud laugh, in which all the courtiers readily joined. For from the glove-stitchers of Falaise had come the mother of the Conqueror. Explanations followed. The bishop was able to convince the king both that the Chief Forester ought to be punished, and that the prebend was fittingly withheld from one not an ecclesiastic.

The bishop's character was eminently one without fear or favour. Hence his assistance in disputed suits was eagerly sought. In the long-protracted quarrel between Archbishop Baldwin and the Canterbury monks, he was one of the Commissioners, and always advocated moderate courses. Though from his education he might be expected to take narrow and ascetic views on all subjects, this was eminently not the case with Hugh. His hospitality was profuse and splendid, his retainers were grandly clothed, and he allowed the introduction of minstrels and glee-singers at his table. In his own habits rigidly ascetic, and so capable of enduring fatigue that sometimes he would sit from morning till evening at his work without breaking his fast, he yet did not exact such endurance from others.

In long Church ceremonies, such as the dedication of churches, he caused those who assisted him at the Mass to take some food before the ceremonial, though this was a great shock to the feelings prevalent in that day. Those that hesitated about this he would severely rebuke. "They had," he said, "but a weak faith, and a poor amount of discretion, inasmuch as they could neither obey without hesitation when they were commanded, nor could perceive the reasonableness of a wise and prudent command."¹

The bishop was especially careful in performing the rite of confirmation, and spared himself no labour in his progresses to have it celebrated with solemnity and devotion. He would "terribly chide" his attendants if the children were not properly marshalled, and sometimes have recourse to blows. He was in fact devotedly fond of children, and carefully educated and cared for many who were brought under his influence. His overflowing charity extended to that most afflicted class—the poor suffering lepers. A house for lepers stood just to the south of Lincoln, and hither Hugh would resort, and give personal service and care to the sufferers. With his own hands he would wash their feet, he would kiss them and console them with the tenderest words, and even eat out of the same dish with them. And as he displayed tender care for sufferers during life, so was he especially remarkable for attention to funeral rites for the departed, and enforced this with severity upon his clergy. He himself never failed to take the office of conducting a funeral whenever he was within reach.

¹ *Magna Vita*, p. 140.

This he regarded as a special honour, and would stop on a journey in order to perform it; and if in a large town there were many to be buried, he would order such an arrangement as might enable him to take part in all the funerals. He scrupled not to keep great men waiting for the banquet while thus engaged, and on two occasions he kept even kings waiting for him—first Henry II., then Richard. Hurried messengers were despatched for him, as the king was impatiently waiting for his dinner. Hugh sent as a reply—"I am occupied in the service of the King of Heaven, and I cannot neglect it for that of an earthly monarch."¹ Strong at all points both in courage and faith, he indignantly refused to inspect a chalice in which it was alleged that an actual conversion of the Host into flesh and blood could be witnessed. "In the name of God," he exclaimed, "let them keep to themselves the signs of their want of faith." And as the moral courage of the bishop was remarkable, so also was his physical courage. He was often in the midst of violent tumults and riots, caused, it may be, by some exercise of his severe discipline. But perfectly undaunted and incapable of fear, he was able to quiet the angry passions which surged around him.

In his discipline Hugh was unsparing, and scrupled not to strike with his anathema those in the very highest place. So terrible was the fate of some of these that it came to be believed that the anathema of the Bishop of Lincoln was equivalent to a sentence of death. It is perhaps in the account of his quarrel with King Richard that the intrepidity of the bishop

¹ *Magna Vita*, p. 245.

comes out most strongly marked. Before relating this with some minuteness it may be observed that in at least two of the matters in which Hugh had to act as commissioner, he appears as resisting or ignoring the claims of the pope. In the quarrel between William Longchamp Bishop of Ely, and Hugh Nonant Bishop of Coventry, Hugh appears to have sided with the former. But when Longchamp requested him to publish the Bull of Pope Celestine against the party of the Prince John and Bishop Nonant, denouncing excommunication against them, Hugh utterly refused to be the papal instrument in the matter. That he did not favour John's intrigues is evident, as he afterwards joined the other English bishops in excommunicating him, but he was not prepared to be the obedient servant of the pope in publishing excommunications. Another occasion was when the bishop had acted with others as the pope's commissioner, to inquire into the outrageous conduct of Geoffrey Plantagenet, now become Archbishop of York. His irregularities were fully proved, and the report of them forwarded to Rome. Geoffrey was summoned to appear before the pope, but he utterly refused to obey. A sentence of suspension was then pronounced against him, and the Bishop of Lincoln was called upon to execute it. He entirely refused to do so. He would rather, he said, be suspended himself than suspend the archbishop. Hugh was no obedient servant of Rome. Nor was his deference to civil rulers greater. Mention has been made of the costly mantle of furs that was fixed by Bishop Robert Bloet to be given to the king annually by the Bishops

of Lincoln. This obligation had been commuted for an annual payment of one hundred marks. During the long vacancy of the see the arrears had mounted up, and the bishop was now called upon to make them good. Hugh, wishing to do away with this odious tax, arranged with the authorities that for a lump sum of three thousand marks the impost should be extinguished for ever. But how was this large sum of money to be raised? The bishop had no treasure to draw upon. He proposed, indeed, that he should retire to Witham, and devote the whole revenues of the see to paying off the charge. But to this his clergy would not agree. They undertook to raise the necessary sum among themselves by contributions, which the bishop ordered should be entirely voluntary, and not paid as commutations for penance.

The next point in which Hugh was brought into collision with the king's justiciar was with regard to the patronage of the Abbey of Eynsham. This was claimed for the king, with the view of holding it vacant and appropriating the revenues; but Hugh resisted the unjust claim, clearly demonstrating that the appointment belonged to him (Eynsham having been founded and endowed by Bishops of Lincoln), and succeeded by the verdict of twenty-four jurors in establishing his right to appoint the abbot. But these minor resistances to royal exactions were as nothing when compared to the bold stand which the bishop made at the Council of Oxford in 1197. Here Archbishop Hubert Walter, acting for the king, demanded of the barons assembled to find the required funds

for three hundred knights and their retainers, to aid in the king's foreign wars. The bishops, by virtue of their baronies, were called upon to take their share in the impost. Upon this the Bishop of Lincoln rose and said, that though he found that his Church was bound to do military service to the king within the bounds of England, he did not find a like obligation binding her to furnish funds for foreign wars, and that he would be no party to infringing the privileges of the Church. He therefore refused to bear any share in the proposed contribution. The Bishop of Salisbury, gaining confidence from this, said substantially the same. On this the king's justiciar, Archbishop Hubert Walter, was driven to fury. He reproached the bishop in great passion, dissolved the council, and sent a messenger to the king to tell him that through the Bishop of Lincoln's opposition, no subsidies could be sent to him. Orders were at once issued that all the bishop's property should be seized, but no officers could be found hardy enough to do this. They dreaded the bishop's anathema as a sentence of death.

For nine months nothing was done, but as the officers were threatened with direful punishments from the other side, they earnestly besought the bishop to make a composition with the king. For this purpose Hugh determined on having a personal interview with King Richard, who was then in Normandy; and though earnestly entreated not to venture into the lion's mouth, he went on his way, nothing daunted, and found Richard at Roche d'Andeli, entering the chapel where Richard was hearing Mass. The bishop demanded the kiss of welcome. The king turned

angrily away. The bishop persisting with greater earnestness, the king yielded, after saying in surly tones, "You don't deserve the kiss." "Nay, but I do," said the bishop. "I have come from afar to see you." During this scene the service was suspended, and all eyes were turned upon the two in anxious curiosity as to the result. What the king's real feelings towards the bishop were was not long left in doubt, when, on the Pax being brought from the altar to the king, he received it with a low reverence, and himself carried it to the Bishop of Lincoln. The reconciliation thus effected, the king and the bishop were able to discuss the matters in dispute. Hugh contended that he had not opposed any legal right of the Crown. The king was apparently satisfied, and Hugh took the opportunity of giving him a lecture on his moral conduct. When, however, he was asked, at the suggestion of some of the courtiers, to be the bearer of letters into England advocating the sending of supplies, he utterly refused, and Richard, angered by his impracticable temper, ordered him to leave the Court, which he at once proceeded to do. Soon after his return he was startled by a message from the Archbishop of Canterbury, desiring him to give the names of twelve of the canons of Lincoln, who were to be sent over to the king to be employed in his affairs. Hugh's answer to the messenger was, that "he had often prohibited his clerks from intermeddling in secular affairs, and he certainly was not going to encourage such a thing now. It was quite enough to have archbishops forgetting their sacred calling."

The response of the archbishop was to order the

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possessions of the Bishop of Lincoln to be taken by the royal receivers. These poor men dreaded to undertake the office, and the matter being represented to the king, he despatched Stephen de Turnham to perform the work, under a threat of losing his life if he did not perform it efficiently. Stephen, with his retinue, set out for the bishop's manor of Sleaford, but unfortunately on the road they met the bishop with his attendants. The officers fled in abject terror, but the bishop proceeded calmly on his way to Buckden, from whence he addressed a letter to his archdeacons and rural deans, bidding them excommunicate, with all the dread formalities, all those who should lay their hands on any of the property of the Church. But the bishop, seeing the persistent determination of the king's advisers to make him and his Church suffer, had already determined to pay a second visit to Richard, and with this view had already taken leave of his Chapter before he set out for Buckden. From Buckden he went to London to consult with the officials if perhaps some satisfactory arrangement could be made. It was upon this journey that several striking incidents happened to the bishop. A woman pretending to be a sorceress was brought before him. Hugh at once tested her powers by asking her what he held in his hand, which was some of the fringe of his stole. The poor woman, struck with terror, confessed her inability to answer, and prayed for pardon. The bishop gave her some salutary admonitions by the mouth of the rural dean, and left her. Presently he encounters a number of officers leading a thief for execution, The

criminal rushes to the bishop and claims sanctuary. The bishop declared that "where there is a bishop and his clergy there is the Church," and takes the man under his protection. At Cheshunt a mad sailor, tied in a most inhuman manner, was loosed by the bishop's order, and by his calm words and fearless demeanour was so impressed, that it is said he was afterwards completely cured of his mania. As the bishop would agree to no composition of the claims made upon him, it was necessary for him to go again to Normandy, but when he reached that country he found that King Richard was lying in great danger from a wound received in storming the Castle of Chalus, and hovering between life and death at Fontevrault. The bishop stayed at Angers, where a large body of Churchmen were assembled, drawn thither by the king's demand for subsidies. The Canons of Lincoln were there, not having the courage to remain at home, in spite of the bishop's protection. There were also the Canons of Hereford, to petition for his approval of Walter Mapes as their bishop. These two bodies of Churchmen, together with the Dean and Chapter of Angers, fearing the wrath of the king, besought the Bishop of Lincoln earnestly to yield to him in his demands. But no petition could have any effect upon Hugh, and he was perhaps encouraged in his resistance by secret intelligence received from the Abbess of Fontevrault that the king's case was hopeless. In effect he soon after died, and the bishop hastened to Fontevrault, though the dangers of the way were very great, to attend his funeral. This took place on Palm Sunday with great

magnificence. The bishop remained for three days at Fontevrault, saying masses for the repose of the soul of the king, whom he always loved, though there had been some sharp passages between them.

The bishop was now to be brought into relations with one whose character was of an entirely different stamp from that of Richard,—the treacherous and profligate John. He was summoned to meet him at Chinon, and John tried all his art to obtain the bishop's countenance and support, but Hugh appears to have been throughout stern and cold towards him, and not to have hesitated to give him very severe reproofs. At the Mass on Easter Sunday at Saumur, where John showed great irreverence, the bishop treated him with scornful disdain, and in the sermon which he preached, drew such a terrible picture of the fate of bad kings that all who heard him, except the unrighteous king himself, were greatly affected. He fully appreciated John's character, and when the king paid him a visit on his death-bed his words were few, and merely relating to temporal matters. The bishop now at once commenced his homeward journey, as to which various anecdotes are recorded in his biography, all tending to illustrate his calm courage and utter fearlessness. For nearly a year now he gave himself to the work of his diocese, which had been too much interrupted, but after that time he was again in France, employed in the ratification of the treaty of peace between France and England.

Finding himself somewhat on his way thither, the bishop could not resist his eager desire once again to visit the beloved solitudes of the Grande Chartreuse,

and to taste, for a season, the joys of monastic life. We omit altogether the very interesting details of his visit, told us by his biographers, and we take up again the thread of the bishop's history at St. Omer, where, on his homeward way, we find him sick, and suffering from a low fever. On Sept. 10 he embarked for England, miserably weak and failing, but still struggling against the disease, and refusing to intermit his devotions; and partly on horseback, partly by water-carriage, with the greatest difficulty, the bishop reached the house of the Bishops of Lincoln, at the Old Temple, London. Here it was evident that his life was drawing to a close. He lay for nearly two months oppressed with sickness, but continually giving utterance to edifying words, and accepting with the utmost devotion all the sacred rites of the Church. His confessions were extraordinarily long and minute.

On Nov. 17 (1200) he breathed forth his righteous soul, and the body having been prepared, a *cortège* started to carry it to his cathedral church at Lincoln. The procession was followed by crowds throughout the long journey; miracles are said to have been freely worked. On the sixth day, Nov. 23, the funeral procession arrived at Lincoln, and was met by King John, with archbishops, bishops, and a large number of nobles. There having been a great Council held at Lincoln, at which the King of Scots had been present, King John and some of his nobles took the bier on their shoulders, and carried it to the entrance of the city. Here a scene of wild confusion took place, all the great men striving for the privilege of taking part in the conveyance of the body. The

streets were knee-deep in mud ; all, even the Jews, gave loud expressions to their grief. Some who could not reach the coffin threw money on it to signify their respect. The door of the half-built cathedral being at last reached, the body was conveyed into the choir by the archbishop and bishops. The coffin was then opened, and the body, arrayed in the vestments worn at the consecration, the face having been anointed, was exposed to the reverential gaze of the people. On Friday, Nov. 24, the body was deposited in the chapel of St. John Baptist in the northern transept, where it remained until the great ceremony of the translation, to be related afterwards. There were present at the obsequies the king, the Prince of Galloway, the Archbishops of Canterbury, Dublin, and Ragusa, and thirteen other bishops. Thus Hugh, as he had always in his lifetime paid the greatest honour to the burial of the dead, was in his own obsequies most highly honoured.

One of the interviews which the bishop had during his last illness was with Geoffrey de Noiers, the architect who had long been employed in the rebuilding of the cathedral church. He told him to be speedy in finishing the altar of St. John Baptist, as he himself would soon be coming to it.

The mention of the rebuilding of the church brings us to consider an important diocesan event, viz. the damaging and the reconstruction of the church of Remigius and Alexander. Towards the end of the twelfth century there were several severe earthquakes in England. Roger de Hoveden tells us that the ground near Darlington was raised up

to a great height, so that it had the appearance of a tower, and continued in this fashion the whole day, falling towards evening with a terrible crash, and sinking into a pit of great depth. Under the year 1185, the same chronicler informs us that a "huge movement of the earth was heard almost throughout the whole of England, such as from the beginning of the world had not been heard in that land. Rocks were rent, stone houses fell. The mother church of Lincoln was split from top to bottom. This earthquake happened on Palm Sunday, that is to say, on April 25, 1185."¹ This was the year before the accession of Hugh to the see of Lincoln, so that on his installation he found a dilapidated cathedral. Probably the Chapter were already occupied in preparing for the work of rebuilding; but Hugh, not content with mere restoration, projected an entirely new church with its choir extending to the eastward of the choir of the church of Remigius. The part injured by the earthquake would probably have to be pulled down, all except the western front, which still bears traces of the earlier builders; but Hugh's choir built under the skilful direction of Geoffrey de Noiers was of an entirely new style, the beautiful pointed arch which we usually describe as Early English, if not the first introduction of this style into England, yet probably the first great work finished in that style.

Mr. Freeman says—"Before the twelfth century had run its course, the fully developed pointed architecture had reached its perfection, not at the hands

¹ Hoveden, pp. 332—359 (ed. Savile).

of a Frenchman at St. Denis, but at the hands of the saint whom imperial Burgundy gave to England. What Diocletian did at Spalato for the round arch, St. Hugh did at Lincoln for the pointed arch."¹ The metrical life of St. Hugh is full of poetical rhapsodies on the wonderful beauties of his work, but it is not altogether to be trusted, particularly as it attributes to St. Hugh the two famous circular windows, both of which are later than his day, and in one of which his funeral is represented. A more trustworthy authority describes St. Hugh's work as having "dignified simplicity and vigorous boldness." Its "largeness of treatment and vigorous originality of conception demand our highest admiration, and place this grand work clearly at the head as well in point of time as in excellence of the works of the Lancet period."² The principal criticism directed against the perfection of the choir is its deficiency in height, in which it is certainly lacking.

To find funds for so huge a work in the then impoverished state of England must have been no easy task. The rhyming chronicler talks vaguely as to the bishop carrying stones and mortar himself, but this would have been a very feeble aid, had he not devised something more important. What he really did was to institute a Guild, called the Guild of St. Mary, the members of which were pledged to contribute to the building according to an assessment. This produced about one thousand marks a year.³ The

¹ Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. v., p. 641.

² Mr. Sharpe, *Transactions of the Lincoln Architectural Society*, 1868.

³ Coggeshall, *Martene*, vol. v., p. 867.

letters patent granted to Hugh's successor, William of Blois, for the continuance of this Guild, will serve to illustrate the way in which the money was raised. "The king to all in the Diocese of Lincoln greeting. We give you manifold thanks for all the good deeds and alms which you have contributed to the Church of Lincoln for the construction of the new work. How bountifully and how liberally you have given is shown by the noble structure of that building. But how incongruous it would be that such a noble work should be left unfinished. And inasmuch as it needs your help and aid, we beg of all of you, we admonish and exhort you in the Lord, that, desirous to finish that which you have well begun, ye would under the divine guidance, and for the honour of the glorious Virgin, patroness of the same church, and also for the love of us and at our request, allow an assessment to be made among yourselves of a contribution for the work of the said building, and would form a society to last at least five years to further that purpose. So that on account of the contribution of aids and alms for building upon earth an abode for so excellent a patroness, which you have lovingly given, ye may be received by her Son our Lord into the everlasting abodes."¹ It is doubtful whether this appeal was responded to with great liberality. The animating spirit of the Guild was gone, and its contributions probably fell off. At any rate it is very easy to trace on the eastern wall of the southern transept a marked difference between the rich work of St. Hugh's time, and the plainer work which followed.

¹ *Rot. Lit. Pat.*, p. 57 (ed. Hardy).

CHAPTER V

BISHOPS HUGH DE WELLS AND ROBERT GROSSETESTE

THE death of St. Hugh was no doubt very generally lamented in the diocese, both on account of his reputation for sanctity, and also on account of the bold and independent spirit which he had displayed towards kings and nobles, and those forest officials who were the dread of the poor. Without waiting for the sentence of Rome, popular opinion at once dubbed him a saint, and miracles began to be worked at his tomb. Very few miracles were attributed to him in his lifetime, and his biographer is candid enough to tell us the contempt which Hugh himself felt and expressed for those who were ever looking for miracles. But after his death numberless wonderful cures are alleged to have been worked at his tomb. These are mostly brought together in the *Legenda* which was compiled to be read on St. Hugh's day (Nov. 17), after he became a canonized saint, and a great number are also mentioned by Giraldus Cambrensis. Giraldus says that these miracles were inquired into and attested by Geoffrey the Precentor,

Reimund Archdeacon of Leicester, William Archdeacon of the West Riding, and many canons and clerks of the church, as also many laymen.

The effect of their report was that the pope issued his Bull, Feb. 17, 1220, constituting Hugh a recognized saint, appointing the day of his death to be solemnly kept, and ordering the translation of his remains to a site more convenient for the devotions of the people, who are promised a relaxation of forty days of penance for visiting his tomb. After St. Hugh's death there was a vacancy of more than two years in the see of Lincoln. It appears that King John wanted the Chapter to accept a nominee of his own, but that they refused to elect him, and ultimately they were allowed to elect William of Blois. This was just the man St. Hugh himself would have selected. He had been precentor of the cathedral church, had been with St. Hugh in his last illness, and the hearer of his devout confessions. William was consecrated Aug. 24, 1203, and one of the earliest acts of his episcopate was to enforce the settlement of a vicarage by the Austin Canons of Dunstable in the church of Pullokeshull. As this establishment of vicarages is a matter of so great importance in the history of the mediæval Church of England, we here give a translation from the old Roll at Lincoln, of the terms on which this vicarage, certainly one of the first established in England,¹ was settled.

“The vicarage in the Church of Pullokeshull, which belongs to the Prior and Convent of Dunstable, or-

¹ St. Hugh is said to have established the vicarage of Swinford, Leicestershire, in 1200.

daind by the authority of the Council,¹ consists of all the altar-dues of that church, and of ten acres of land, and the third part of the tithe of the harvest of the whole township, except that which William Wilcard and Henry Buignun hold in fee. The Vicar is to pay the Synodals, but the Canons the Procuration for the entertainment of the Archdeacon. The other burdens due and accustomed to be paid the Canons and the Vicar shall discharge proportionately to their several interests."

The value of vicarages when settled is frequently quoted in the Roll as four or five marks, and its proportion to the whole value of the benefice about one to three. Thus even after the provision of vicars which furnished the churches with settled ministers, a large proportion of the endowment of the benefice still went to monastic bodies which did nothing for the parish. The next Bishop of Lincoln, Hugh de Wells, was the great establisher of vicarages in his diocese.

In the second year of the episcopate of William de Blois, an event took place in his cathedral of so strange and startling a character, that we give a verbal translation of the record as it is found in the *Waverley Annals*. "In the Church of Lincoln, William de Bramford, sub-dean of the same church, was slain by a certain clerk who had been a vicar of the same church, before the altar of St. Peter on the 7th of the kalends of October (Sept. 23); but the same clerk was in the same church immediately torn in

¹ The Council of Westminster held 1200 A.D. The original authority is the Lateran Council of 1179.

pieces by the servants of the aforesaid sub-dean and others, and being dragged outside of the church was hanged outside the city. All this was done on the Sunday, the Dominical letter B.”¹ This piece of extraordinary savagery probably involved the putting of the church under an Interdict for a time, and may have interfered with the building going on, and perhaps necessitated the application for the letters patent which have been before quoted. That Bishop William was a faithful follower of St. Hugh, may appear not only from the continuance of his building plans, but also from his similar care for the interests of the poor lepers, for whom St. Hugh had done so much. No doubt at his instance a royal letter was issued to the justices, sheriffs, and bailiffs of Lincoln, to let them know that “the king had taken into his custody, protection, and defence, the house of the lepers in Lincoln, and all their lands, tenements, and possessions; they are bid to guard, defend, and protect the said lepers of Lincoln, and all their property, as though it were the king’s own, and not to do them, or permit it to be done, any molestation or injury, and if anything has been abstracted from them, to cause it at once to be made good, and to prevent any one hindering the clerks who preach for them, and collect money for their use.”² The diocese of Lincoln soon lost the care of the tender-hearted successor of St. Hugh, who died May 1206, and again for a three years’ interval there was no bishop to preside over the see, while the unrighteous king plundered without

¹ *Ann. de Waverleia*; *Ann. Monast.* vol. ii., p. 257.

² *Rot. Lit. Pat.*, p. 54 (ed. Hardy).

scruple the property dedicated to sacred uses. The Close Rolls furnish us with some instances of this.

The king writes to the custodians of the bishopric of Lincoln to receive his huntsmen with twelve couple of hounds, and to accommodate them at Sleasford. The said custodians are credited for divers outlays, as for £54 paid for 39 horses at Stow Fair, for money spent upon the king's pavilions, purchase of scarlet and blue cloth for the wrappers of the horses, and £25 for 300 pigs.¹ There are many instances given in the letters patent of the exercise of patronage by the king in the diocese of Lincoln, but there soon came a time when the quarrel between the king and the pope having become embittered, the fierce pontiff would no longer brook opposition, but fulminated his Interdict against the whole land, which was published on Passion Sunday, March 23, 1208. What was the effect of this papal curse on the diocese of Lincoln? In no part of the Church of England could its work have been more disastrous. On the one side there was the full effect of the papal interdiction of all religious services; on the other there was the king furiously raging, and inflicting all sorts of punishments on those who should obey the papal commands. Placed thus between two fires, the unfortunate clergy of Lincoln must have been in a sore strait. Immediately on its promulgation the king published the edict following—"Know ye that from Monday next, before the feast of Easter, we have committed to William de Cornhill, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, and to Gerard de Caville, all the lands and property of

¹ *Rot. Lit. Claus.*, pp. 94—100.

the abbots and priors, and of all religious, and also of all clerks in the diocese of Lincoln, who shall refuse from that date to celebrate the divine offices, and we command you from that time forward to be obedient unto them as our bailiffs, and to give credit to them in those matters in which they shall advertise you in the meanwhile, as to our proper selves."¹

The clergy and religious bodies had thus to choose between the curse of Rome and the vengeance of the king. And that this vengeance was a serious matter there is abundance of testimony. The "religious" had to shut themselves up in their monasteries, while their barns were sealed up, and all their rents brought into the Exchequer. As many of the clergy were married their wives were seized, and only allowed to be redeemed on a heavy payment. If a clerk was met by the king's officers riding on a journey, he was dragged from his horse, robbed, and ill-treated, and there was no way by which he could obtain justice. When a robber was brought before the king charged with killing a priest, the king ordered him to be released, for, said he, "he has only slain one of my enemies." The relatives of those bishops who had ventured to pronounce the Interdict were seized, mulcted of their goods, and thrown into prison. Three of the bishops remained on the king's side (Winchester, Bath, and Norwich), and the king wishing to add another to their number, made, as he thought, a judicious selection by nominating Hugh, brother of the Bishop of Bath, Archdeacon of Wells, who had been employed in the king's chancery, and

¹ *Rot. Lit. Pat.*, p. 80. Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i., p. 100.

of whom a ready compliance with the king's will was expected.

This expectation was, however, doomed to be disappointed. Archdeacon Hugh was sent abroad for consecration, it being impossible to obtain valid consecration for him in England during the Interdict. He had to go to Rouen to obtain it. But instead of proceeding thither, he was persuaded in France by the banished prelates to join their party. He made the oath of canonical obedience to Stephen Langton, and was consecrated by him at Melun, December 20, 1209. We may easily conceive the king's anger at being thus deceived, and it was not till July 1213 that, the quarrel being now settled, the bishop, in company with the other prelates, was able to return to England. The king, perceiving that under the changed state of things he would have to make some compensation to the Church for all the money he had pilfered from it, was inclined to shower favours on the Bishop of Lincoln. An assessment had been made of the money to be restored by the king to the Church, and of this 15,000 marks were actually paid to Lincoln, which was probably not the case in some other dioceses.¹ The rent of £8 for Stow Fair was remitted; the manor of Wilthorpe was given to the Church for the annual payment of £20. The bishops were authorized to hold courts in all

¹ There is considerable confusion and contradictory statements as to the amount paid by the king. The sum due to Lincoln was assessed at 23,000 marks, and of this it would appear from *Rdt. Lit. Pat.*, p. 106, that 15,000 marks were paid, but Roger de Wendover says that 15,000 marks was the whole of the sum paid to all the bishops,

their manors, and their woods were placed under the forest laws. The king writes to Roger de Neville to restore to the bishop the money received from the Abbey of Eynsham. He bids Brian de Insulâ furnish him with three hundred stags for Stow Park. He writes to the Sheriff of Nottingham to eject all trespassers from the bishop's lands.¹ But the bishop was doomed to disappointment if he thought that now he should be able to proceed in the happy administration of his diocese. We can trace him beginning his work. On July 2, 1214, the Interdict was entirely removed, and in October of that year Bishop Hugh was engaged in the dedication of Dunstable church, built by the house of Austin Canons at Dunstable, when "counts and barons, abbots and priors, and an infinite number of people were present." But very soon after this the bishop seems to have gone abroad, and to have been absent from England during the worst period of the struggle between the king, the barons, and the French. This was a time of miserable trouble, spoliation, and rapine, of which Matthew Paris has left us a vivid picture, and not the least terrible of the troubles fell upon the county of Lincoln and Hugh's cathedral city. Lincolnshire would seem to have favoured the king's side, as we read of its being subjugated by the Barons Gilbert de Gaunt and Robert de Roppel, who also captured the city of Lincoln, the castle still holding out for King John. Lincoln was treated as a captured city, and the treasury of the cathedral was robbed to

¹ *Rot. Lit. Claus.*, pp. 138, 154, 179*b*, 180, 217, 599, 580, 581.

the amount of 11,000 silver marks, which had been collected by the Precentor, Geoffrey of Deeping, for the building of the fabric. A change was made by the decisive battle of "Lincoln Fair," May 20, 1217, in which the Regent and his troops completely routed the Barons and the French. At this juncture Bishop Hugh returned to his diocese, and found in England the Legate Gualo extorting ruinous fines from bishops and abbots for having favoured the cause of the barons. He himself was amerced in the sum of one thousand marks to the pope, and one hundred marks to the legate, but was enabled now to commence his vigorous diocesan work. This was indeed characterized by extraordinary vigour, and, as it would seem, by a good deal of severity. In 1219 he was acting as itinerant judge, and had reduced the unhappy Jews to such straits that the king was obliged to interfere to help them. On other occasions the royal clemency was extended to persons in the bishop's prisons.¹ The state of things probably demanded strong and vigorous remedies, but the bishop may have gone perhaps too far. It was not probable that a man of such a temperament would allow the monastic houses which had usurped so many churches for which they had made no sufficient provision for ministerial duties to escape. Hence the great work of establishing vicarages, recorded in the *Liber Antiquus* in the Lincoln registry, of which mention has already been made.² This contains the terms of the establishment

¹ *Rot. Lit. Claus.*, pp. 387, 403, 405, 567, 541, 563.

² Printed in 1888 by Mr. A. Gibbons, with a preface by the writer.

of several hundred vicarages, and also of many appropriations of churches to monasteries, in which case the vicarage is usually carefully provided for. It may seem astonishing that so great a work as the establishing over three hundred vicarages, with all the special details which are recited in each case, could have been performed between the bishop's return (probably 1218) and his death in 1235. But the work, as we find from numerous entries in the vicarage book, had been going on while the bishop was abroad, by his official, Reginald of Chester. We subjoin a settlement made in this way, which seems very favourable to the vicar. "Know all men that our beloved in Christ, Reginald of Chester, our official while we were in the parts beyond the sea, by the authority committed to him by us of ordering and making provision in the Church of Billingborough, and instituting a perpetual vicar in the same, has made in this respect the ordination and provision following, namely, that the vicar who is to minister in the said church, and who shall have the cure of souls, shall have the whole altar dues and all the land belonging to the said church, with the buildings and other appurtenances, and his rights in the pastures and turbaries, and shall make residence in the said church, and in his proper person minister in the sacerdotal office. But the nuns of the House of Sempringham shall receive the tithes of the harvest of the said parish entire, and shall pay the Synodals, and provide hospitality for the archdeacon, and shall discharge all the other burdens of that church." In the year 1220 the bishop made a visitation at Dunstable, and settled

five vicarages in the churches appropriated by the Austin Canons there, viz. Studham, Chalgrave, Totterhoe, Segenhoe, and Husbourn-Crawley. This house was one of the most grasping, turbulent, and troublesome of all with which the Bishops of Lincoln had to deal, and was so much hated by the inhabitants of the town of Dunstable that they seriously contemplated removing their town to some other locality in order to escape its neighbourhood. About this time also the bishop had some trouble with the Abbot of St. Albans, who tried to extend the "pontifical rights" granted to him by the pope in the time of Bishop Robert de Chesney, over all churches in any way connected with the abbey. This claim the bishop was able successfully to resist. Bishop Hugh had no love for monks and their belongings, hence the harsh terms in which he is spoken of by Matthew Paris, but that he was a very efficient administrator, and did good service to the Church in his diocese, is evident.

Under him the building of the western transepts and nave of the cathedral went on apace; the bishop was also building the episcopal house at Buckden, and bringing to completion the large hall at the Lincoln Episcopium begun by St. Hugh. He was also constructing a hall at Thame. We learn from entries in the Close Rolls that he was careful to replenish his park at Stow with deer, which no doubt in the late troubles had been devastated, and as episcopal parks were henceforth to be under the forest laws the deer would be well protected. We may get a fair notion of the ecclesiastical state of Bishop Hugh's diocese from the Canons of the Council of Oxford,

held in 1223 within his diocese. These Canons furnish a general body of directions to the clergy as to the performance of their duties. They are enjoined to preach the Word of God, and not to be dumb dogs, but with salutary bark to drive away the disease of spiritual wolves from the flock. They are to visit the sick as often as they shall be called, and to see that fitting preparations are made for the decency of divine worship. Every church is to have a chalice of silver with other fitting vessels, a clean and fair napkin of proper size. The old corporals, which were too small, are to be laid up as relics or burned. There is also to be a linen covering for the altar and other decent accessories, books suitable for singing the service and for reading, and at the least two priestly vestments. The assistants at the altar are to be clothed with surplices. Various provisions are made to prevent any possible tricks with regard to the new establishment of vicarages. The parson of the parish is not to change himself into a vicar and to dispose of the parsonage to another. Nor is any part of the *personatus* of one church to be made over to the *persona* of another, as there can be only one *persona* of a church. None is to be appointed vicar of a church who will not personally serve in it, nor any one who is not in priest's orders or who will not at once proceed to priest's orders. No vicar is to be appointed with a less stipend than five marks, except in Wales, where, "on account of the slender revenues of the churches, the vicar must be content with less." The bishop is to exact an oath from the presentee of any church that he has not given or

promised anything for the preferment, nor entered into any agreement with regard to it. And in spite of the oath, if the bishop has reasonable grounds of suspicion he need not admit the clerk. The archdeacons, in their visitations, are to take care that the canon of the Mass is correct, and that the priests know properly to pronounce the words of the canon, and that they understand the meaning of the words they are repeating. Lay people are also to be taught how to baptize in case of necessity. The Host, the Chrism, and consecrated oil are to be kept securely locked. An inventory is to be made of the possessions of all churches, that the archdeacon, at his visitation, may see that they are preserved. Priests are not to keep their wives (*concubinæ*) openly in their houses, nor to visit them openly, nor have they the power of leaving them anything in their wills. Nuns are not to wear silk veils, or to have gold or silver pins to fasten them. Monks are not to have silk belts or ornaments of gold and silver. Nuns are to wear a ring. Jews are not to have Christian servants, nor to build synagogues, but to pay their dues to the Church. They are to have badges (*tabulæ*) on their breasts, of a different colour from their dresses, to be two fingers wide, and four fingers long. And they are not to enter churches. After the visitation of the monasteries carried out in 1232, by order of the pope, from the strictness of which the bishop is described by Matthew Paris as "the persecutor of monks, the violent bruiser (*malleus*) of canons and all religious men," Bishop Hugh issued a paper of questions to his clergy, which is perhaps the earliest of visitation

articles. The questions numbering forty-nine are too long to insert here, but it may be observed that the principal points inquired into are the continence of the clergy, also whether they are "enormously illiterate," frequenters of taverns, usurers, traders, or fighters. Whether they frequent the houses of nuns or are secular justices, sheriffs, or bailiffs. Whether they frequent the performances of actors, or play at dice or bones. Whether they are in priests' orders. If they ever use vinegar for the Holy Eucharist, or uphold the customs of tournaments with battering-rams, or scot-ales, or take out the super-altars to use them for grinding colours. The whole of the questions are very suggestive of the customs of the day, and they certainly testify to a minute and careful supervision on the part of the bishop. The principal residence of this energetic bishop seems to have been Stow Park; and here his will, made in 1233, is dated. By it he gives one hundred marks to the fabric of the cathedral in Lincoln, and all the timber throughout his episcopal estates of which he might die possessed, reserving to his successor the right of redeeming this for fifty marks.

Bishop Hugh died February 7, 1235. Perhaps, of all the good works done by Bishop Hugh for his diocese, the most valuable was his earnest patronage of Robert Grosseteste and his recommendation to the Chapter to elect him as his successor. We first hear of Grosseteste in connection with the diocese of Lincoln as Archdeacon of Northampton. This office he exchanged for the Archdeaconry of Leicester and the Rectory of St. Margaret's.

On March 27, 1236, Grosseteste was freely elected Bishop of Lincoln by the Chapter, and on June 17 was consecrated at Reading by Archbishop Edmund Rich and some of his suffragans. His first work was to obtain the help of some of the Dominican and Franciscan friars, then new orders, with whom he had been connected as a teacher at Oxford, and of whose powers he thought very highly. He then proceeded to make a visitation throughout the whole of his diocese. This was quite an unaccustomed thing for a bishop to do. Disciplinary matters were entrusted to the archdeacons, while the bishop remained as the supreme judge and last resort. But this did not satisfy the energetic Grosseteste. He himself tells us his method of proceeding.

“At the commencement of my episcopate, I began to go round thro’ the several archdeaconries, and in the archdeaconries through the several rural deaneries, causing the clergy of each deanery to be called together at a certain day and place, and the people to be warned that at the same day and place they should be present with the children to be confirmed, and in order to hear the Word of God and to confess. When clergy and people were assembled I myself was accustomed to preach the Word of God to the clergy, and some Friar, either Preacher (Dominican) or Minorite (Franciscan), to the people. At the same time four friars were employed in hearing confessions and enjoining penances; and when the children had been confirmed, on that and the following day, I and my clerks gave attention to inquiries, corrections, and reformation, such as belong to the office of a

bishop." Some very strict disciplinary measures were taken by the bishop towards the monasteries. He removed no less than seven abbots and four priors, and put others into their places. At the conclusion of his visitation Grosseteste issued a body of constitutions which severely condemn the prevailing abuses, such as drunkenness, rough and boisterous games and fights, simony, incontinence. He also set himself to reform certain special abuses in regard to the presentations to livings. It was the custom of many patrons to present to a benefice any person however young or unfit, in any degree of minor orders, who should arrange for the work of the Church to be done by a deputy. The bishop refused to admit such presentees. He describes one of them as "a boy still in his Ovid," and declares that he never will admit any who are not competent to perform their duties rightly. He also set himself to oppose the practice of "farming" livings. This was often done by the monasteries, which undertook to pay a foreign incumbent a certain sum, and make what they could out of the benefice, which was to be served nominally by one of their body. Grosseteste, like his predecessor Hugh, insisted that all monasteries in possession of benefices should found vicarages in them. In the year 1237 was held the great Council of London, under the presidency of Cardinal Otho. After the Council the cardinal paid a visit to Oxford, and was lodged at Oseney Abbey. Here a riot took place between the Oxford students and the cardinal's attendants. The cardinal was obliged to fly, and vented

his anger against the University by laying it under an Interdict, excommunicating all the members, and inducing the king to imprison many of the students. Then Grosseteste came to the rescue. He owed everything to Oxford, had long been the leading man there, and a great benefactor to the University. The bishop was not afraid of the face of man, and he told the legate plainly that the fault was with his own insolent followers. He demanded and obtained the withdrawal of the Interdict, and the release of the students from prison. Soon after this Grosseteste was involved in that bitter dispute with his Chapter as to the right of the bishop to visit the affiliated and prebendal churches of the cathedral, which caused so much ill-will, and finally ended in a way little creditable either to the bishop or Chapter. The parties to the suit all appeared before the pope at Lyons, where he was presiding over a Council (1244), and after much pleading a compromise was effected. The dean who represented the Chapter was paid for his acquiescence in the bishop's claim by the see of Lichfield. The bishop paid the pope for his decision in his favour by signing that "charter of degradation" (as Matthew Paris calls it), which John had given to Innocent III., and the original of which had been burnt.

Up to this time the bishop, so resolute in his opposition to other abuses, had been the obedient servant of Rome. He was soon to be forced by the strongest convictions into other views. As a reformer in his diocese he was unsparing in his vigorous assaults on all kinds of abuses. The instances are too many to

be recorded here.¹ Matthew Paris speaks of him as "one to whom quiet was an unknown thing, whose hand is against every man." He made strict inquisition into the morals and way of life of both noble and ignoble, and so great scandal did these inquiries cause, that an appeal was made to the king, who ordered the Sheriff of Hertfordshire not to allow laymen to appear before the bishop. Grosseteste, on first returning from Lyons, had lent himself to support the payment of dues to the Papal Court. But he soon began to see how iniquitous these exactions were. Two Minorites called on him, bearing the Papal Bulls, for a contribution of six hundred marks from his diocese. The bishop utterly refused to support such an exaction. He had a great deal of trouble with those religious houses, which claimed exemption from episcopal control, as the Cistercians and the military orders. In order to meet this he caused deputies from all the religious orders to meet him at Stamford, Leicester, and Oxford, to exhibit before him the charters of their founders, the confirmations of bishops, and the papal privileges. Of these he took copies, saying that he would consult the Lord Pope upon them. This, together with the difficulties in which he was involved by the proceedings of Archbishop Boniface, obliged him to make another visit to the Papal Court, which was still held at Lyons, in Lent 1250. This visit was a memorable one in the bishop's life. Reports had reached the pope of his refusal to allow money to be collected for the papal

¹ These all may be found related in detail in my *Life of Grosseteste*, published by the S.P.C.K.

claims, and of his demands on the exempt orders. He was received very badly, and his requests for additional disciplinary powers contumeliously rejected. The iniquity of the whole system then pressed heavily upon his mind, and he relieved himself by delivering that famous sermon, which is the most scathing denunciation of papal iniquities to be found throughout the Middle Ages. The sermon was read for him by one of the cardinals, the pope evidently not suspecting its purport, or it would certainly not have been permitted to be read. The bishop returned from Lyons sad and dispirited, but soon renewed his activity.

Matthew Paris speaks of him as making a journey through his diocese, compelling the beneficed clerks to observe continency, and not allowing them to retain in their houses any women of whom there could be suspicion. Frequently, also, he preached to the people, obliging the clergy of the neighbouring parishes to attend and hear him. It appears that a great many incumbents of livings were then only in minor orders. These Grosseteste endeavoured to make seek advancement to the priesthood. Becoming more and more appalled by the mass of abuses which he found, the bishop grew in strictness both towards seculars and regulars. The "cells" of monks depending on a foreign monastery were generally mere seats of corruption. The occupants of these Grosseteste summarily ejected. Towards the nuns he was very strict. "If any one," says Matthew Paris, "should repeat all the tyrannies which he exercised, he would be judged not to be severe only, but utterly rigid, and without any feelings

of humanity in him." This was the monkish view, but it is probable the bishop was somewhat over rough in his proceedings. The pope seems to have in a measure relented, as Grosseteste received from him now the authority to visit the exempt orders, and to cause them to institute vicarages, but with regard to obliging all incumbents to proceed to the priesthood he could obtain no help. The admiration of all his brother bishops was excited by this bold champion of the Church, and when the king, who had so often falsified his pledges, endeavoured to extort from the clergy a tenth of their goods for three years, having obtained as authority for this exaction a papal mandate, his brethren listened with enthusiasm when Grosseteste denounced the papal order as a "cursed contribution," and refused to "bow the knee to Baal."

The king was obliged to make a solemn promise to carry out the provisions of Magna Charta, and to spend the money on a crusade before he could obtain it. Then Grosseteste denounced all who should violate the Great Charter in such terrible terms, that he made the ears of them that heard him to tingle. The bishop was constantly being driven on to more and more complete antagonism to Rome and all its ways. "Those rascal Romans," says Matthew Paris, "who obtained the pope's provision for benefices, he hated as the poison of a serpent. He was wont to say that if he committed the charge of souls to them, he should be acting like Satan. He often threw down with contempt the letters sealed with the Papal Bulls, and openly refused to listen to such commands."

Then there came to himself a command more

audacious and more exasperating than usual. The pope, perhaps from a sort of grim spirit of revenge, ordered him to admit at once, and whether a vacancy existed or not, a youth named Frederick di Lavagna, his nephew—a boy not in holy orders—to a prebend in the cathedral church of Lincoln. He replied to the pope's agents—"Those who introduce into the Church of God such slayers of the divine image and handiwork in the sheep of Christ, are worse than the murderers themselves, and are nearer to Lucifer and Antichrist." This was new language for a pope to hear. "Who is this doting old man," he exclaimed, "deaf both in ear and mind, who judges things in this bold fashion? By Peter and Paul, were it not for my natural mildness of disposition, I would hurl him to utter ruin." The cardinals ventured to inform the irate pontiff that this was one of the most learned and most famous bishops of Christendom. But if the pope was persuaded to stay his excommunication (of which there is a doubt), he still continued to cherish his wrath against Grosseteste.

In the year 1253 the bishop was seventy-eight years of age, and in the midst of his energetic and vigorous work he was seized at Buckden with an intermittent fever, which, after lingering for some months, carried him off on "the night of St. Dionysius." During his intervals of illness the bishop uttered many striking sayings, which are recorded by Matthew Paris. The famous monk of St. Albans, though he said many severe things of Grosseteste's proceedings, yet cherished a profound admiration for his character. Especially did he admire that national spirit which

was so strong in the bishop, and which shone out most conspicuously at the last.

Grosseteste had addressed a letter to the "nobles of England, the citizens of London, and the commons of the whole kingdom," calling upon them in energetic terms to defend their Church from Romish exactions. On his dying bed the same subject occupied his thoughts. "With a deep sigh, he said Christ came into the world to win souls, if then any one fears not to destroy souls, is he not rightly to be called Antichrist? Is not the destroyer of souls to be held the enemy of God and an Antichrist? The privileges granted by the holy Roman pontiffs, his predecessors, the pope that now is blushes not impudently to annul." In the same strain he continued to denounce all the papal abuses, and died, as it were, with a protest against Rome, and a claim for the nationality of the Church of England, on his lips. Far greater than the reforming energy which he had displayed in his diocese, and which had effected much, was the boon which this famous bishop bestowed on the whole Church of England by his inspiring and independent words and attitude, which failed not in the future to bear good fruit.

CHAPTER VI

FROM BISHOP LEXINTON TO BISHOP BEK

BISHOP GROSSETESTE was buried in the transept of Lincoln Cathedral with great honour; Archbishop Boniface, the Bishops of London and Worcester, many abbots and friars, and an immense crowd of clergy and people being present at his funeral. His grave was marked by a goodly tomb of marble, and "an image of brass over it." Very soon the spot where the famous bishop rested began to be celebrated for miracles. Rome steadfastly refused to canonize him, though entreated by many and most influential petitioners. But the people canonized him, and the Chapter of the cathedral encouraged and supported this devotion. It was said that a miraculous oil issued from the tomb, and one of the canons was regularly appointed as custodian of the tomb of St. Robert, and his office was no sinecure. The people from all the country round came flocking to pay their devotions there. And not alone the poorer sort. Richard Earl of Cornwall, the second man in the kingdom by birth and wealth, the friend of the bishop during his life, came to his tomb as a religious

shrine. A successor of the bishop granted an indulgence of forty days to all who would worship at his tomb. Thus between the *shrine* of St. Hugh and the *tomb* of St. Robert, the cathedral of Lincoln was well provided with attractions. Then the Chapter had to consider the choice of a successor to one so famous. At this period elections to sees were in a great measure free, Magna Charta having been vigorously reinforced. So the Chapter of Lincoln at once proceeded to elect their Dean, Henry de Lexinton. It was fortunate that they were so prompt, as the king desired to press upon them Peter de Aquâ Blancâ, Bishop of Hereford, the most disreputable prelate of his time. Though foiled in his purpose, the king did not refuse to confirm the appointment and to restore the temporalities, and Henry de Lexinton was consecrated at Lambeth, May 17, 1254, being the Sunday after Ascension Day. On the day of the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul he was enthroned in the cathedral. The bishop took his name from Lexinton or Laxton, Notts, and was one of a family of brothers all of whom reached distinction. He succeeded to the see at a troublesome time, when the clergy were suffering from terrible exactions in order to support the pope in his crusade against Sicily. It was to protest against these exactions to which the clergy had in no way consented that representatives of the lower clergy first appeared in a Convocation or Legatine Council (1255). We are told in the Burton Annals—"The Præctors of the beneficed clergy of the Archdeaconry of Lincoln put forward on behalf of the whole community that they have suffered a grievance in that the

tenth of their benefices has been granted to the king, they themselves not having been summoned, and that when it is a question of committing any one to an obligation, the express consent of the person obliged is necessary.”¹ It is said by Matthew Paris that Bishop Lexinton was deficient in liberality. He does not give any proof of this assertion. The bishop appears to have bestowed some benefits on the vicars-choral of the cathedral, but the details of his work are hard to trace, as no Roll of his remains.

In 1256 Bishop Lexinton was at Lichfield by the pope's order to receive the resignation of Bishop Roger de Weseham, who had become disabled by paralysis. The pope, Alexander IV., seems to have been on good terms with the Bishop of Lincoln. He aided him in a dispute in which he was now involved with the University of Oxford. This was a part of the diocese of Lincoln which gave the bishops a vast amount of trouble during the Middle Ages. At this time some disturbances had taken place at Oxford, and the bishop endeavoured to exert his visitatorial authority to quell them. This the University men resisted, and alleged Papal Bulls exempting them from the authority of the Bishops of Lincoln. The bishop replied by obtaining another Bull from the pope giving him plenary authority. The University appealed to the king. At the Abbey of St. Albans, where the king was staying, nine of the Oxford Regents appeared before him (March 1257). They accused the Bishop of Lincoln of trying to weaken the privileges of the scholars against the ancient and

¹ *Burton Annals; Ann. Monast.*, vol. i., p. 360.

approved statutes of the University. The king, unable to decide in the matter, referred them to the Great Council to meet next year. Meantime, however, the bishop's commissioners at Oxford appear to have settled the dispute. At the Convocation held at Merton, when the clergy, exasperated to the last degree by the exactions practised on them, threatened to excommunicate the king, Bishop Lexinton was probably present, but soon after this he died (August 15, 1258).

His episcopate is principally remarkable for the extraordinary story of little St. Hugh, of which his cathedral city was the scene. The Jews at Lincoln were a powerful and rich body, and as such were hated and envied. A story was now invented against them to the effect that in derision of the sacrifice of the Cross, they had crucified a little boy, and had thrown his lacerated body into a well. It was pretended that a great meeting of the Jews having taken place at Lincoln, a little boy of nine years old, the child of a poor widow, was captured by the Chief Rabbi, named Jopinus, and after having been for twenty-eight days confined in a secret chamber, was brought out, subjected to all sorts of tortures, and finally crucified, in exact imitation of the sacrifice of the Cross. The mother, fearing that something terrible had happened to her child, laid her case before the king, who ordered strict inquisition to be made. The body is said to have been miraculously discovered, and immediately on its production numerous miracles were done by it. Then came the dean and canons and all the clergy of the cathedral church to

convey with all the funeral pomp possible the body of the supposed martyr to be buried in the church. Some months afterwards the king came to Lincoln accompanied by the bishop and his brother, John de Lexington, a judge. A court was held, and the unfortunate Chief Rabbi Jopinus was summoned before it. It is said that under a promise of life he confessed the deed. But the promise was not observed. The wretched man was tied to the tail of a horse and dragged through the streets of Lincoln till dead, and no less than eighteen Jews were executed in a similar manner. Seventy-one more had been arrested, but these were spared on the intercession of the Dominican Friars, supported by Richard Earl of Cornwall. This foul tragedy disgraced the episcopate of Henry de Lexington, who does not seem to have done anything to mitigate the horrors of it. How differently would St. Hugh or Robert Grosseteste, who always protected the Jews, have acted. Bishop Lexington died in August, and in the next month (September 21) the Chapter again elected their dean, Richard de Gravesend, to the see. Elections for the time were entirely free, the country being in the hands of the commissioners, who enforced the observation of Magna Charta. Richard de Gravesend was consecrated at Canterbury by Archbishop Boniface on the Sunday after All Saints' Day, November 3, 1258. Gravesend was a man of considerable distinction, though he seems to have truckled to the popular craze in the matter of little St. Hugh. He had been employed as a commissioner both by the bishop at Oxford, and by the pope to enforce his Bull as to the observance of Magna

Charta. "By the consent of all," says Matthew Paris, "he was a man justly deserving praise, and at any rate no one could regard him as a nonentity or useless person." Immediately after his consecration as bishop he went into France with the king. On his return in 1260 war actually broke out between the king and the barons, and Bishop Gravesend took at once the side of the latter. In 1262 the bishop was actively employed in disciplining the monasteries, and obliging them to establish vicarages. The whole of the religious houses in his diocese were compelled to exhibit their charters. Soon after we find the bishop one of the three commissioners employed in the abortive negotiations with King Henry. The battle of Lewes and the captivity of the king and prince seemed to give the party which the bishop favoured the ascendancy. But the Pope's Legate, Ugo de Falcodi, came to call the bishops to account, and the Bishop of Lincoln together with others was summoned before him at Boulogne. Richard de Gravesend declined to go, and for this contumacy when, after the battle of Evesham and the wreck of the barons' party, the Legate Ottobonus arrived in Lincoln, he had little favour to expect. But the bishop was a prudent man and wise in his generation. He knew well the way of success with Rome, and at once made up his mind to offer the pope "a vast sum of money." He thus escaped, while London, Winchester, and Chichester were suspended. Gravesend going to Rome, lived for some time in comfort and luxury, and in high favour with the pope. Meantime the affairs of his diocese were administered by his commissioners, John

de Maidstone and John de Lindes. On his return in 1269 we find the bishop at Oseney Abbey consecrating and blessing the high altar. A little after he is visiting and correcting Dunstable Priory. The priory is made to give up the living at Lidlington, which had been let to it to farm by the absentee rector who was now dead. The priory would thus seem to have stepped in to the rectorial rights, without title, but the bishop prevented this usurpation. There is not, however, much to record of the diocesan work of this bishop. In 1275 a coadjutor was assigned to him. In 1277 the archbishop took an ordination for him at Huntingdon; twenty marks having been contributed by the Bishop of Lincoln for the expenses of the day. In 1279 (Advent) Bishop Gravesend died. His best record is to be found in the Chapter Acts of the cathedral, which inform us that he acquired the advowsons of numerous churches for the patronage of the see, viz. Sutton, Aylesby, Greetham and Little Bytham, in the archdeaconry of Lincoln; Waldegrave Cornwick, Cranford St. John's, Farthingstone, Thenford, in the archdeaconry of Northampton; Twyford, Chalfont St. Giles', Stoke Hammond, in the archdeaconry of Buckingham; and for the Dean and Chapter the advowson of the church of Gurnley in the archdeaconry of Leicester. He also gave to the cathedral church a sumptuous chalice of gold and a chalice of silver, a most beautiful silver cross, with a foot, to be carried processionally at double feasts, a silver image of the Blessed Virgin with two silver cherubs, divine relics of saints, caskets and cases of silver, chasubles, choral copes, tunics, dalmatics, and

other vestments, and a Lenten veil of great beauty. To the Archdeacon of Oxford he appropriated the church of Iffley; to the community of vicars-choral he gave ten pounds a year; he increased the daily allowance of the canons from eight pence to twelve pence by the gift to the Chapter of Bierton, Quarrendon, Stoke and Buckland, the churches of Paston, Hambleton, Bytham with Holywell, the moiety of Glenham with Tathwell. He also established a regular band of choristers, appointed twelve boys with their master to live together, "assigning them a competent maintenance from the church of Little Ashby and others." It has been observed that one of the most magnificent parts of Lincoln Cathedral, the Angels' Choir, was in building during the whole of the episcopate of Bishop Gravesend. There is no record, however, of his having contributed towards this great work, though as dean of the cathedral previously to his episcopate he must have had much to do with the design and arrangements for it. On the death of Bishop Gravesend, for the third time in succession the dean of the cathedral was elected to the see by the Chapter.

Fulk Lovel, Archdeacon of Colchester, had been first elected, but had declined the honour. Then Oliver Sutton, the dean, was chosen. He, like his predecessor Gravesend, was a very distinguished man. He was well learned both in the civil and canon law, a man "of gentle lineage, and very prudent in his management of both temporal and spiritual things, he was a good governor of his house, not covetous, nor extortionate. All the fines which he inflicted on

delinquents he caused to be paid to the mendicant brethren, to poor nuns, and to the poor of the parishes in which the ill deeds were wrought ; and he insisted on these payments being made, requiring the certificate of the rural dean that it was done. Of those who were born serfs on his manors he only required the due and ordinary service, and laid upon them no exactions or talliages" (John de Schalby).

Oliver Sutton was elected bishop, February 6, 1280, and consecrated at Lambeth on St. Dunstan's Day following (Sunday, May 19). A very grand ceremony inaugurated the work of the new bishop. The magnificent Angels' Choir was now completed, and it was determined by the Lincoln Chapter to celebrate its opening with all the grandeur possible, and to make it the occasion of translating the bones of St. Hugh to a splendid golden shrine erected within it. The worship of this saint had become so popular all through the north of England that the flock of pilgrims was said to equal the concourse of people to the tomb of St. Thomas in the south. Very valuable offerings were made at his shrine, to the great enrichment of the cathedral, and no doubt the funds needed for the Angels' Choir had been specially helped by the treasures deposited within St. Hugh's head.¹ It seemed fitting, therefore, that his translation and the opening of the beautiful building now complete should

¹ The head was in some way detached from the body, and opened, so as to be a place for receiving special offerings. At the translation it was put back in the chapel of St. John Baptist. There is preserved in the Chapter muniment-room at Lincoln a volume entitled *Apertura capitis et feretri S^{ti} Hugonis*, containing the audit of offerings made at St. Hugh's shrine twice a year for about two centuries (Canon Wordsworth).

be associated together. A general response was made to the invitation to pay special honour to the Burgundian saint. There came to Lincoln Edward I. and his queen; Edmund, the king's brother, and his wife, the Queen of Navarre; the Earl of Gloucester; the Earl of Lincoln and his countess, and the Earl of Warwick. Of prelates there were present the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Edessa, the Bishops of Lincoln, Bath, Norwich, Worcester, Llandaff, St. Asaph, Bangor, St. Davids, elect of Exeter. There were present two hundred and thirty knights, and a vast number of clergy. The expense of entertaining this great assemblage was born by Thomas Bek, consecrated immediately before Bishop of St. Davids. The Beks may be called an episcopal family, as we find them at Durham, Norwich, Lincoln, and St. Davids. This was intended to be the consecration feast of Bishop Thomas, out of his reverence for St. Hugh, but it must have been one of ruinous cost. In addition to the feasting of the great men, the less distinguished persons were regaled with six casks of wine, which were made to run in two great conduits outside the western gate of the episcopal palace from nine o'clock in the morning till curfew time. The golden shrine remained untouched until the rapacious times of Henry VIII. In the great spoliation of the cathedral in 1542 it formed one of the most valuable pieces of spoil. Bishop Fuller in after days set up a marble slab, which marks its former site.

Bishop Sutton seems to have got to work in his diocese immediately after his consecration. The

Chronicle of Dunstable records a strict visitation there. The prior was removed. The sub-prior and certain other officers of the house were interdicted from the performance of their offices, and many of the brethren were expelled. Some of the luxurious practices of the house, which was deeply in debt, were stopped. At Godstowe the nuns were in a very disorderly condition. Three of them had escaped from the cloister and gone into secular life. They were ordered to be excommunicated. At Tykford near Newport Pagnel in Bucks, three of the brethren refused to enter the chapter-house and submit themselves to the bishop's visitation. They were excommunicated. But, disregarding this, they ventured to celebrate Mass. Then they were declared guilty of irregularity, and the vessels and vestments used in the illegal Mass were destroyed. With the disorderly monasteries on one side, and the king's bitter exactions oppressing him on the other, Bishop Sutton cannot have had a very easy time. He was doubtless present at the Convocation (1282) which contended so strongly against the king's demand for money, and when King Edward afterwards came to hold a Parliament in Lincoln (1284), and the bishop was constrained to do him honour, he probably had not much love for him in his heart. For the writ *Circumspectè agatis*, issued about this time, was held to be a dangerous limitation of the power of the Church, and, indeed, Edward throughout his reign was constantly contending to restrict the power of the Church on one side, and to extract more contributions from it on the other. In spite, however, of his reasons for

opposing the king, Bishop Oliver Sutton (unwisely, as it would seem, and as his biographer John de Schalby admits) allowed himself to become a royal commissioner, to make, together with the Bishop of Winchester, a new assessment of clerical incomes, with a view of raising higher the contributions of the clergy. The bishop thus rapidly became the most unpopular prelate in England. The chronicler complains bitterly of these new taxers, who "incomparably exceeded the insolence of the old officers, valued property more heavily than it was wont to be rated, and even thus could not extinguish the inextinguishable avarice in the heart of the king."¹

But if Bishop Sutton zealously laboured to gain for the king a larger sum from the tenths which had been granted to him by the pope, he was doubtless overwhelmed with horror like the rest of the clergy, when, at the Convocation of 1294, the enormous demand of one-half of their revenues was made upon them by the king, and enforced by armed men and threats of outlawry. We are not surprised to find that when the pope, by his famous Bull *Clericis laicos*, forbade these exactions, the Bishop of Lincoln joined Archbishop Winchilsea in resisting them, and in consequence exposed himself and his diocese to the most violent attacks. A letter was issued to the sheriffs ordering them to sell publicly the goods and chattels of the prelates, religious persons, and all clerks having a benefice exceeding in value forty shillings a year, who had not obtained the king's protection at Easter, to pay the money into the treasury, and occupy for

¹ *Ann. de Oseneid*; *Ann Monast.*, vol. iv., p. 333.

the king's use the lands and property of such recusants.¹ This harsh measure was displeasing to some of the barons, and the king was obliged eventually to withdraw the order, but in the meantime the opposing prelates and their clergy suffered great inconvenience. It is said that the friends of the Bishop of Lincoln contrived that the sheriff should seize a fifth part of his goods, and he was allowed to remain in possession of the rest. The bishop, in fact, gradually withdrew his opposition to the king's exactions, for first the pope had published a relaxation of the Bull, and secondly the outrages committed by the Scots had exasperated the English beyond measure.

We find in Bishop Sutton's *Register* an order for the general taxation of the clergy for a war with the Scots, who are described as the enemies of God and man, and as guilty of unheard-of cruelties. Another order in the same *Register* directs a general collection for the adornment of the cathedral church, and promises an indulgence to all contributors. It is to be hoped that the last days of this energetic bishop were passed in peace, and certainly his death, as recorded by John de Schalby, appears to have been a marvellously peaceful one (1299). He says—"At the hour when the matins of St. Brice were being said in his presence by his presbyters and clerks, during the concluding words of the verse which describes the death of the saint, he gave up his spirit to his Creator." During Bishop Sutton's episcopate took place the tragical death, from what seemed a trifling ailment, of the beloved Queen Eleanor, at Harby,

¹ Barthol. de Cotton, p. 394.

near Lincoln (Nov. 28, 1290). The viscera of the queen were interred in Lincoln Cathedral, and her body embalmed was conducted by slow stages to Westminster, every place at which it rested being afterwards marked by the erection of a splendid cross.

The Bishop of Lincoln accompanied the procession the whole way, and in the absence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, took the chief part in the performance of the funeral rites at Westminster.¹ Bishop Sutton was a great benefactor to his cathedral. The original church had been built over the small church of St. Mary Magdalene, enclosing it within its walls. Great inconvenience arose from this both to the people of St. Mary Magdalene and to the worshippers in the cathedral. Bishop Sutton built for the parishioners a church outside the cathedral, and thus got rid of the anomaly. He also built the north side of the cloisters, in spite of the opposition of the dean, who was unwilling to surrender his stable which formerly occupied this place. He also procured the enclosure of the close by a crenellated wall, with towers capable of defence. The object of this was to secure the canons and other ministers of the church who had to go to the church in the night for the matins services. This bishop also began the erection of the vicar's court, which was finished in 1309. The diocese had had two vigorous, perhaps somewhat secular, prelates to direct it; it was now to have experience of a saint.

The chancellor of the cathedral, John of Dalderby,

¹ The splendid monument erected to her in Westminster Abbey has been exactly reproduced at Lincoln Cathedral by the liberality of J. Ruston, Esq.

was elected, freely as it appears, by the Chapter, January 15, 1300. He was consecrated at Canterbury by Archbishop Winchelsea, June 12, 1300. His registrar, John de Schalby, gives him the highest character for piety, devotion, and learning, and there is reason to believe that he had done much in keeping up the Lincoln School of Divinity, which was famous in the time of St. Hugh, and at which Giraldus was a scholar. Bishop Dalderby made many gifts to the cathedral church, viz. the tithes of three parochial churches to the body of priest vicars, in aid of the expenses incurred by them in the building which had been begun by Bishop Sutton, and to each of them two marks annually, to be paid by the Prémonstratensians. To the see he gave two churches, of which South Ferriby was one. He annexed the church of All Saints at Lincoln to that of St. Mary Magdalene, and as the chancellors had always had the patronage of All Saints, he arranged that they should have the third turn of presentation to the united parishes. The church of All Saints being within the Close, was given to the Dean and Chapter to be removed. In January 1301, within a year of Dalderby's consecration, King Edward I. came a second time to Lincoln to hold a parliament, and was the bishop's guest at his manor of Nettleham from January to March. Probably the relations of the king and the bishop were not over cordial, as there was still a great contest as to the royal exactions from the clergy, and the bishop supported the clerical protests made to the parliament. More than this, when the king's officers entrusted with the collection of a fifteenth

from the goods of the laity by the parliament, showed little consideration for the distinction between lay and clerical, and endeavoured to gather from all alike, the bishop issued a letter to his archdeacons bidding them excommunicate any person who should thus intrude and venture to demand the tax from ecclesiastical persons. But Bishop Dalderby's chief troubles were to come from the religious orders.

At this time the English nuns had obtained a very bad reputation for their wandering about and loose living, insomuch that the pope felt constrained to issue a peremptory order to the archbishop and his suffragans to bring about the abatement of this scandal. Bishop Dalderby's *Register* testifies to his work in this matter. Three nuns of the convent of St. Mary-in-the-Meadows near Northampton, who had been long professed, viz. Sisters Isabel, Matilda, and Ermen-truda, are mentioned with sorrow, as having "let loose the restraints of virtue, and devoted themselves to the detestable pleasures of the flesh." Their excommunication is ordered. In another convent a sister, Joanna, had gone off and devoted herself to secular life, and great disorder prevailed in the house. Sister Agnes of Godstowe, who had escaped and been brought back in Bishop Sutton's time, had again escaped. She is now to be excommunicated.

But the great trouble of Bishop Dalderby's episcopate arose from the proceedings against the Templars. The savage attack made by the King of France on the Templars was little to the taste of the English king, Edward II., but a peremptory letter from the pope induced him to order the arrest of the Templars

throughout England. The pope then nominated certain commissioners to try the accused, of whom Bishop Dalderby was one. The bishop avoided acting with the other commissioners, but held a private inquiry in the Chapter-house at Lincoln, the issue of which was that he declined to take further proceedings against the Templars. In fact, from the evidence of several letters in his *Register*, it may be inferred that he believed in their innocence. The bishop had had the opportunity of making himself acquainted with the character of this famous military body. A large Commandery of the Templars existed about ten miles from the cathedral city at Temple Bruer. When, therefore, at the instance of the archbishop, the Provincial Synod of Canterbury passed sentence against the body in 1311, Bishop Dalderby was probably much grieved. Nevertheless, he was constrained to carry out the archbishop's orders in consigning the knights to the various monasteries appointed to receive them as places of punishment, and to regulate their treatment in food and liberty, according to the minute directions transmitted to him. All this is carefully entered in his *Register*. We find that John de Stoke, priest, was consigned to Peterboro', William de Lafford to Ramsey, William de Sawtry to Ormsby, Roger de Nereys to Croxton, Thomas to St. Albans, William de Echedin to Bourn, William Raven to Croyland, Thomas de Chamberlein to Spalding, Hugh de Tadcaster to Sempringham, William de Chelsey to Kirksted, Mauris de Newsum to Revesby, Peter de Octeringham to Leicester, William de Thorp to Thornton,

William de Burton to Barlings, William de Pocklington to St. Andrew's, Northampton, John de Sadelescumb to Swineshead, William de Bernkell to Warden. The infliction of these unfortunate knights on the monasteries for the performance of their penance was an arbitrary act which must have been very distasteful to the religious houses. We have evidence of at least one act of rebellion against the arrangement recorded in the bishop's *Register*. William de Pocklington had been assigned to St. Andrew's, Northampton. The monastery refused to receive him, and sent a letter to the bishop signifying their refusal. The bishop responded with a threatening letter. But St. Andrew's still held out. Then the bishop wrote to the Rural Dean of Northampton, bidding him to cause to be published in all the churches of the deanery the excommunication of the prior, sub-prior, precentor, cellarer, and sacristan of the abbey. No doubt the monastery was at last compelled to yield.

There is abundant evidence that the bishop was devoted to an ascetic and retired life, and the various political troubles of his day must have been a source of grief to him. He kept clear of them as much as possible. At the informal parliament or *Colloquium* held at Lincoln in 1315, the bishop does not appear to have been present. At the parliament at Lincoln next year he certainly was not present, as four proctors were appointed to represent him. His *Register* tells us that his health had broken down. On Feb. 16, 1315, being at his manor at Stow, he had appointed Henry de Hemingburgh, sub-dean of the cathedral, to be his coadjutor, and to do all acts "which were not

strictly episcopal." In his solitude at Stow he would be duly informed by his proctors of the important transactions of this parliament. The king was lodged in the deanery, the parliament met in the Chapter-house, or in the Convent of the Carmelite Friars. The time was one of fearful scarcity, almost approaching to a famine. The sumptuary laws passed by the parliament of the previous year fixing the prices of all comestibles, were now repealed as unworkable, and every one was allowed to sell their goods for the best price they could get. But there was in effect very little to sell. Walsingham tells us that the summer of 1315 was so wet that scarce any corn could be gathered, and that which was gathered was in such bad condition that it was necessary to have it dried in ovens before it could be ground. The bread made of it had no nutritive qualities, so that they who ate it were quickly hungry again. Starvation and pestilence were everywhere throughout the land. Though the see and the diocese of Lincoln were at that time by far the richest in England,¹ yet the bishop and the dean and chapter must have been put to great straits in entertaining the king and the magnates of the land from Jan. 28 to Feb. 20. The bishop, scarce ever seen abroad, was reported to exercise the greatest austerities, and the opinion of that day, which measured religion by the amount of self-torture, assigned to him the character of a saint. When, therefore, on Jan. 12, 1320, he died, and was buried in the

¹ The writs show that the bishop and dean and chapter of Lincoln were rated far higher than any other. The loan demanded of Lincoln is £500. Of the other sees, 300 or 400 marks.

western transept of the cathedral, there was immediate flocking to his tomb, and claims were made of miracles wrought there. Another miracle-worker was added to those potent ones already existing in the cathedral. Some of the clerks of the cathedral drew up an office¹ for the deceased bishop, with *legenda*, *collects*, and hymns in anticipation of his being canonized, and having a day appointed for his commemoration. But the pope was a French bishop, not favourable to England, or the secular clergy, and was little disposed to favour Bishop Dalderby's claims, though attestations of miracles performed at his tomb (still preserved) were forwarded, and also letters from the Bishops of York, Durham, Winchester, Ely, Worcester, Coventry, Norwich, and Lincoln, praying for his canonization. In 1327 the young king, Edward III., addressed a letter to the pope with the same object. He says that the bishop "from the first flower of his youth remained pure and innocent, a true servant of God, abstaining from every evil deed, and being imbued with liberal acts, distributed the grace of doctrine to all who were willing to receive it; that grace he carried out in all his actions, so that madmen were brought to sanity by him, and others who used the barking of a dog in place of speech were restored to rational speech by his intervention. He who is the Searcher of hearts, and who knows what is in man, was willing to impart the grace which pervaded his hands, even when dead, to those in need, by giving

¹ This, long supposed to be lost, was discovered by the research of the late Canon Wickenden, and published by him in the *Archæologia*.

sight to the blind, power of walking to the lame, and other innumerable benefits, and therefore we have judged it fitting with devout prayers to beseech your holiness that you would command this mirror of such great purity and innocence to be consummated and enrolled among the saints." The request, however, was not granted. During Bishop Dalderby's episcopate the unequalled rood tower of the cathedral, which had been begun in Bishop Grosseteste's time, but which had fallen with a great crash during the building, was brought to completion, forming one of the most beautiful parts of the exterior of the cathedral. After the death of Bishop Dalderby the diocese of Lincoln fell upon somewhat evil times. The election of a prelate, which had for some time been comparatively free, was now no longer so. A weak king, opposed by a great portion of his subjects, was on the throne; and the support of the pope being essential to him, a price had to be paid for this in allowing the pope a free hand in the provision of benefices.

The Chapter of Lincoln first chose Henry of Mansfield, their dean, as Dalderby's successor, but the dean refused the honour, and then the choice fell on Anthony Bek, chancellor of the church. Anthony, the son of Walter Bek of Luceby, constable of Lincoln Castle, was the near kinsman of that Bishop Thomas who had so royally feasted the great assemblage at the translation of St. Hugh. He was not, however, destined to succeed to the dignity which his younger brother Thomas afterwards reached. At that moment there was an envoy of the king, Lord Badlesmere,

present with the pope at Avignon, commissioned to buy his support against the party of the Earl of Lancaster. For this he paid 15,000 marks. And in addition he sought and obtained the pope's "provision" of the see of Lincoln for his nephew, Henry de Burghersh. He had procured from the king a letter greatly extolling the merits of this youth, and the pope consented to "provide" him. It mattered not that a competent divine had been already elected by the Chapter, nor that the new aspirant was under canonical age, being only 29. Lord Badlesmere obtained his request, and Burghersh was consecrated at Boulogne, July 20, 1320. There do not appear to have been any conspicuous merits in the bishop thus thrust into the see. Not even gratitude can be claimed for him. He certainly soon turned against the king his benefactor, and is by many supposed to have been privy to his murder, as was his friend Adam Orleton, Bishop of Hereford. His uncle, who had obtained the preferment for him, taking the same side, was captured at Stow, where he was in hiding in the bishop's palace, carried away to Canterbury, and hanged. The bishop's manors and rents were seized by the Crown, and the king addressed urgent letters to the pope begging him to remove Burghersh from his see. The pope, who was now on the side of the queen and her favourites, would not yield to this request, and Bishop Burghersh continued actively to support the queen's party.

The feebleness of the king, and the strong opposition which his misdeeds provoked, gave great boldness to the Church at this time. At a Convocation held at

Lincoln in 1323, the king asked for a subsidy for his Scotch war. The reply of the clergy is remarkable —“ It appears to the clergy of the Province of Canterbury assembled in synod that the best counsel is that our lord the king, the magnates and nobles should first studiously endeavour to recommend themselves to God, and to the prayers of the Church, and desist from unjust exactions and oppressions of ecclesiastical persons, and of the common people, and should seek to draw towards themselves the hearts of their subjects ; and for the subsidy demanded of them by the king, they answer unanimously that they are not able to concede anything more on account of the scarcity which is imminent, and the various and unusual loans and oppressions very well known, which the clergy have had to bear.” The king was aware that one of the principal leaders of the opposition to his demand was the Bishop of Lincoln. Nevertheless, Bishop Burghersh afterwards made peace with him, and was restored to his temporalities. He probably made false professions of loyalty, for as soon as the queen returned from France with increased power, he declared himself on her side (1326).

When the deposition of the king and the coronation of the young prince had been determined on, Bishop Burghersh celebrated a grand festival at Wallingford in his diocese. Yet at the beginning of the reign of Edward III., the Bishop of Lincoln, together with Bishop Ayermin and Bishop Orlton, held aloof from him and supported the party of the queen. This was perhaps merely to indicate that he was ready to be bought, as, in effect, in the summer of 1327 he

was made treasurer, and on May 12, 1328, received the Great Seal as chancellor. His secret intrigues with the queen still continued. He even supported her in her infamous connection with Mortimer, and when she and her lover were surprised together in Nottingham Castle, Bishop Burghersh was in the room with them. But though much cannot be said in favour of the moral character of this bishop, he was no doubt a clever man of affairs, and capable in business matters. Thus the king employed him not only as treasurer and chancellor, but also as naval agent, entrusting to him the southern district for raising and equipping the fleet, which gained for him the great victory of Sluys. After this he accompanied the king to Flanders, and there on December 3, 1340, died at Ghent, being only forty-nine years of age. His body was brought to Lincoln, and buried in the Angels' Choir of the cathedral, near to the shrine of St. Hugh. His brother and nephew, who were great benefactors to the cathedral,¹ were afterwards buried near him, and the famous Burghersh monument and the Burghersh chantry keep the name in memory. The Chronicler Walsingham accuses the bishop of "insatiable avarice," and tells an extraordinary story as to his being condemned to walk after death up and down the manor of Tynghurst, which he had enclosed in such a way as to defraud the poor of their rights. The diocese no doubt felt relieved in obtaining, after the death of Burghersh, one of the popular Bek family for its head. Thomas, the brother

¹ Bartholomew Burghersh, the bishop's nephew, left lands for the maintenance of five poor clerks and five choristers.

of Anthony, and the third son of the constable, was elected, and immediately posted to Rome to obtain by a huge bribe the pope's confirmation. His brother Anthony had succeeded to Norwich by the same means. These payments seem to be simply simoniacal, but they were condoned by the opinion of the day, because paid to the pope. Walsingham speaks well of this bishop, and calls him "a noble and excellent clerk." There is not much record left of his five years' episcopate.

CHAPTER VII

FROM BISHOP GYNWELL TO BISHOP RUSSELL

THE incumbency of the bishop who succeeded Thomas Bek introduces us to a time of terrible trouble, not alone in the diocese of Lincoln, but throughout England. It was the time of the awful visitation known as the Black Death, the ravages of which were so great that in some parts they involved nearly the extirpation of the whole population. The divine who was elected to the see (freely as it appears) was John Gynwell, Canon of Lincoln and of Salisbury, Rector of Llanelly, and Archdeacon of Northampton. His election was confirmed July 3, 1347, and his consecration took place September 23. So great at this time was the irritation of the lay people against the clergy, that in the parliament of 1348 sixty-four petitions for redress of grievances were presented. Whatever was the cause of this bitterness, it must have made the work of the bishop extremely difficult. Then came the desolating effect of the pestilence. The contemporary writer Knighton gives us a graphic account of the state of things. "It was at that time that a lamentable pest, coming into the parts nearest

the sea by way of Southampton, reached Bristol, and there died of it, as it were, the whole of the healthy people of the town, their death being almost sudden, for there were few who kept their beds more than two or three days, and some only half a day, and then they died about the setting of the sun. The Bishop of Lincoln sent throughout the whole of his diocese, and gave a general power to all and singular his priests, both regular and secular, to hear confessions and absolve all by the full authority of the bishop, except in case of debt, in which case if the person was able to pay he was to give full satisfaction. So great was the scarcity of priests that many churches were desolate, being without the divine offices. Scarcely could a chaplain be got under ten pounds to minister in any church, when before he would have cost not more than five marks, or two marks and board. Scarce any would take a vicarage of twenty pounds or twenty marks. But in a short time there was a flocking into orders of many whose wives had died in the pestilence, some of whom were very illiterate, and just able to read after a fashion, and not able to understand what they read."

The staff of clergy at the cathedral at this time was brilliant, and many of them reached the highest dignities. Four successive Primates of England came from among the Canons of Lincoln, viz. Stratford, formerly Archdeacon of Lincoln; John de Offord, Dean; Thomas Bradwardine, Canon (twice elected), Simon de Islep, Canon. At the consecration of the latter at St. Paul's, December 20, 1349, the Bishop of Lincoln was not present. Probably there was no

great love between these two, otherwise it could hardly have come about that in the course of the dispute between the bishop and the University of Oxford upon a mere matter of form,¹ the archbishop should have taken the strong step of putting the town of Banbury, where the bishop was residing, and the chapel of the bishop, under an Interdict. But the bishop was soon called upon to interfere in matters of more serious importance at Oxford. On St. Scholastica's Day (1354) there took place a fierce quarrel between the gownsmen and townsmen of Oxford, which led to terrible results. About forty of the scholars were killed, several of the Halls were sacked, and great cruelties practised. The bishop at once laid all the churches of Oxford under an Interdict, which was not taken off for three years. The conditions of its removal are entered in the bishop's *Register* as follows—"That the commonalty of Oxford every year for ever after celebrate an Anniversary in St. Mary's church on St. Scholastica's Day, for the souls of the clerks and others killed in the conflict; that the Mayor for the time being, the two Bailiffs, and threescore of the chiefest burghers personally appear in the said church on the said day of St. Scholastica, and there at their own charges celebrate a Mass with a deacon and sub-deacon, for the souls of the said scholars, and after the Gospel read, every one of the said laics shall offer at the great altar in the said church one penny, of which oblation forty

¹ Namely, whether the chancellor should present himself before the bishop for admission, or whether he might be represented by proctors.

pence shall presently be distributed to forty poor scholars of the University by the hands of the proctors, and the residue of the oblation shall be given to St. Mary's Church." This composition was confirmed by a charter, in which the mayor and burgesses bind themselves under a penalty of one hundred marks yearly to perform these services; and, in fact, they were performed for something like two hundred years.

The ill-feeling between Bishop Gynwell and the Archbishop of Canterbury still continued, and the bishop seems to have taken a somewhat unjustifiable way of opposing the primate. He obtained from the pope (according to Birchington) the privilege of being exempted from the jurisdiction of the archbishop. Indeed the bishop was probably more papal than any bishop of his time, for he it was who was employed by the pope to carry out his excommunication of the judges who had ventured to pass sentence upon the Bishop of Ely for alleged complicity in a murder.¹ One of these (Simon de Drayton) had died, and the Bishop of Lincoln coming to the church where he was buried, caused the wall to be broken down, that the polluted corpse might not contaminate the doorway, and the body, dragged from its grave, to be thrown into a "stinking pond." Then "the bishop gave orders to the Abbot of Peterboro' that he should do the same to the body of John de Engan, a knight, but when he prepared to do this, he was hindered by the valour of the son of the knight." The king and the barons were very indignant at these outrages, and

¹ The story is a long and very curious one. The full details may be read in the Chronicle of Ely, in the *Anglia Sacra*.

it is probable that Bishop Gynwell only narrowly escaped some signal mark of the royal vengeance.

The name of this bishop, as regards the cathedral, is principally connected with the introduction of the cultus of St. Mary Magdalene. The church dedicated to her had originally stood within the cathedral, but had been removed by Bishop Sutton. Bishop Gynwell now appropriated to her a chapel in the nave, and in this chapel he himself was buried in 1362.

In the incumbency of the next bishop, John Bokingham, we are brought face to face with the Wycliffite heresy, which was very extensively spread in the diocese of Lincoln. Wycliffe himself had occupied three livings in succession in the diocese, namely, Fillingham, Ludgersall, and Lutterworth, and his opinions were specially prevalent at Oxford, partly, no doubt, from hatred of the friars who opposed him. Bokingham was a secular prelate, whose appointment had been obtained by the king through a papal provision, that he might be employed in state affairs. He does not appear to have at first taken much notice of the new opinions, and is no doubt one of the bishops who is specially pointed at in Walsingham's invective—"All these things did the bishops know and hear, but they went one to his farm, another to his merchandise, and left their sheep exposed to the ravages of the wolves, and none raised his staff to drive them away. The whole body of the population was full of wolves, and ravenous wolves whose bites were deadly, but there was no watch-dog to bark against them, and by his voice frighten the thieves."

It may have been apathy, or it may have been a prudent timidity which kept the bishop quiet. The times were dangerous for asserting Church privileges. The people were excessively embittered against Churchmen. William of Wykeham, and Brantingham Bishop of Exeter, had been driven from their offices. John of Gaunt, with his strong anti-church policy, was ever near at hand, being closely connected with Lincoln. But a new archbishop, of a bold and vigorous spirit, determined that this apathy should cease. Archbishop Courtney issued a circular letter to his suffragans, enjoining them to use greater diligence in combating the new views. The friars only needed this encouragement to take aggressive proceedings. As to one very prominent Lollard, we have full details of the bishop's action preserved in his *Register*. This was William Swynderby, who had gained some reputation for sanctity as a hermit, but being attracted by Wycliffe's teaching, had established himself at Leicester, where, with John Waytestathe and William Smith, he preached Wycliffist doctrine in the chapel near the Lepers' Hospital. The friars reported this to the bishop, who immediately issued his inhibition, full of charges of "wolfish rapacity" and "pestiferous poison," and summoned Swynderby to appear before him in ten days. The Lollard did not appear, but leaving the chapel he erected for himself a sort of pulpit between two mill-stones which were exposed for sale just outside the chapel, and here he often preached in contempt of the bishop, alleging that on the king's highway he had a right to do so. Crowds of people thronged to hear him, and

the bishop, "terrified by the raging crowd," was inclined to let the matter drop, but the friars insisted on his proceeding. A second citation was now issued, and to this Swynderby responded, and appeared before the bishop at Lincoln. We must give Knighton's account of the scene which followed. "He (Swynderby) justly incurred the penalty of becoming fuel for fire. Then did his friends begin to weep, and dashed their hands and their heads against the walls with lamentable cries. For there were many who had accompanied him from Leicester to aid him, though in vain. But by chance there was present at Lincoln on that day the Duke of Lancaster, who was always ready to help all Lollards, for he believed them to be the saints of God on account of the softness of their words and the gentleness of their looks, but he was deceived like many others. The duke interceded with the bishop for the said William, and the bishop agreed to pardon him on the conditions following." The conditions were that the delinquent was to read his recantation in Lincoln Cathedral three times, in three churches in Leicester, in Melton Mowbray, Holowtown, Harbrough, Loughborough. The clergy of the churches were to certify that this had been done, but as a matter of fact none of it was done, for Swynderby fled away to Coventry, where "in a short time he was held in greater honour than before, preaching there for a year, and subverting many to his execrable sect" (Knighton).

Bishop Bokingham seems to have been satisfied with his very feeble proceedings against Swynderby, for there is no trace of his having further followed up

the persecution of the Lollards. But the archbishop was certainly not satisfied, as he came down to Leicester in 1389 to hold a special visitation. He ordered the arrest of eight persons, but only three were captured. On these he inflicted a severe penance, but Lollardism was by no means checked in the diocese of Lincoln. It went on to such an extent that the bishop who succeeded Bokingham found it dominant everywhere. Things in England were at this time coming very near to a complete revolt from the Roman Church. The English clergy were recalled from Rome by a special proclamation, and in 1393 the strongest anti-papal statute before the Reformation was passed. The pope, seeing the danger, set himself to court John of Gaunt, the leader of the anti-papal party. Without regard to justice, he, to please the duke, ordered the translation of Bishop Bokingham from the see of Lincoln to that of Lichfield, that he might make a vacancy at Lincoln for Henry Beaufort, the young son of John of Gaunt by Katherine Swynford. By a sort of bland imposture it was alleged that this was done on account of the state of health of the bishop translated, and for his greater ease. The Chronicler is somewhat severe on the transaction. "About the same time the pope, by the persuasion of certain persons, deprived John de Bokingham of his see, inasmuch as he was now old and in bad health, so that he seemed too feeble to govern so great a diocese and so many people. He, however, translated him to the see of Chester, which was then vacant, not considering that on account of the manners of that race (the Welsh) that see was

much more difficult to govern than the one which the bishop had before governed with great credit and discretion.”¹ This was probably Bishop Bokingham’s view also, as he would not accept the translation, but, being ousted from Lincoln, retired to Canterbury, “where, among the monks of Christ Church, he laudably waited for the end of life with much contrition of heart.” He died March 10, 1398. Bokingham had not done much, in all probability, for the welfare of his diocese, but one thing he had done which was sorely needed. He had made a visitation of his cathedral, and the record of this, which remains in his *Register*, discloses a grievous state of immorality, almost all the cathedral clergy openly keeping mistresses. Scandals indeed were rampant at that time. The new Bishop of Lincoln, only twenty-three years of age, was an illegitimate son of the duke, and though after his father’s marriage with his mother (1396) the pope and king granted letters of legitimacy for the three sons and one daughter born out of wedlock, yet this could not really remove the stain of his birth. Bishop Beaufort does not seem to have given any thought to his episcopal obligations. On the accession of his half-brother, Henry IV., he was made chancellor; and as a statesman, though not as a general, he may be deserving of considerable credit. But the diocese of Lincoln was well rid of him when, after six years’ tenure of the see, he was translated to the rich preferment of Winchester (1404).

To the next Bishop of Lincoln great interest

¹ *Annals of Richard II.*

attaches, and his career illustrates in a remarkable way both the growth and the decadence of Lollardism. The house of Austin Canons, of St. Mary-in-the-Meadows, near Leicester, had produced some remarkable men—Gilbert Foliot, the great opponent of Becket; Henry de Knyghton, the Chronicler, were both abbots of it. Of this house Philip Repyngdon was a canon. The teaching of Wycliffe, which, as we have seen, was very prevalent at Leicester, had taken hold of some of the canons of St. Mary's, and among others of Philip Repyngdon. He began (as Stephen Patryngton tells us) to "preach the doctrine of Wycliffe concerning the sacrament of the altar." But being desirous of further teaching, he migrated to Oxford and took up his residence in Broadgate Hall. Oxford at that time was practically Wycliffist. Robert Rugge, the chancellor, John Huntsman, and Walter Dish, the proctors, were disciples of Wycliffe; Nicholas Hereford, John Aston, and Lawrence Bedeman, prominent members of the University, were strong Wycliffists. On taking his degree of D.D., Repyngdon set forth, in his prelection, that he was ready to defend all Wycliffe's views, but as regards the Sacrament of the Altar, he desired to lay his hand on his mouth till such time as God should enlighten the minds of the clergy on the subject. The chancellor appointed Repyngdon to preach before the University at St. Frideswide's on Corpus Christi day. The archbishop endeavoured to prevent this, but the chancellor would not yield, and Repyngdon preached the sermon. Then Archbishop Courtney summoned Rugge the chancellor before the Convocation which was then

sitting at Lambeth. He received a severe lecture, and was made to promise to stop Repyngdon and Hereford from setting forth their views. Like all the Lollards, Rugge seemed as willing to recant and return to orthodoxy as he had been to assail it. Repyngdon and Hereford were suspended from preaching or lecturing. They appealed to John of Gaunt, but found no help in him. Then Repyngdon followed suit in recanting. The archbishop came down to Oxford in November (1382), and at a solemn synod held there, Repyngdon made a public recantation of all Wycliffist doctrine. After this he returned to Leicester, and in 1393 was made abbot of the house. But his reputation for learning at Oxford must have been considerable, as in 1397 he was elected chancellor, and again in 1400, 1401, 1402. In fact, he must at this time have been the most prominent and conspicuous figure in the university. This would account for his being selected by King Henry IV. as his confessor and chaplain. There is extant a letter of his to the king which is very creditable to him. He speaks plainly of the king's duties to his people. The advice seems to have been well taken by King Henry, for after the battle of Shrewsbury he sent a special messenger to the Abbot of Leicester to inform him of his success. When Beaufort was translated to Winchester, and the pope according to custom nominated to the see vacated, the king no doubt used his influence for Repyngdon, who was named Bishop of Lincoln, and consecrated March 29, 1405. His episcopate was not altogether creditable to him. It has been already said that the

diocese of Lincoln was greatly overrun by Lollards, more perhaps than any other part of England. Knighton, who belonged to this diocese, said that every third man you met was a Lollard. The opinions of these men were very various, some of them somewhat blasphemous. But they all seem to have had the peculiarity of a great readiness to shift and recant their opinions. This, as we have seen, Repyngdon had done, and most of the Lollards conspicuous at Oxford in his day had done the same. Thus, William Thorpe in his examination before Archbishop Arundel says—"By example chiefly of some whose names I will not now rehearse of, H. of I. P. and B. (Hereford, Purvey, Becket), and also by the present doing of Philip Rampington (Repyngdon) that now is become Bishop of Lincoln, I am now learned to hate and flee all such slander (scandal) as these men have defiled themselves with, and in it that in them is have envenomed the Church of God. For the slanderous revoking at the Cross of Paul's of H. P. and B., and how Philip Rampington pursueth Christ's people, will not be unpunished by God." That the converted Lollard-bishop was excessively severe in his discipline was not a mere charge of one of the sect. The archbishop fully confirms it.

"As touching Philip of Rampington that was first canon then Abbot of Leicester, which is now Bishop of Lincoln, I tell thee that the day is comen for which he fasted the even. For no bishop in this land pursueth now more sharply them that hold thy way than he doth. And I said, Sir, many men and

women wondereth upon him, and speaketh him mickle shame, and holdeth him for a cursed enemy of the truth."

As Bishop Repyngdon had probably lost a good deal of popularity in his own diocese from his extreme severity, so was he also destined to forfeit the good feeling of his brethren the bishops by the line he took as to the disputed popedom. At this moment two rival claimants, Benedict and Gregory, were contending for the office. England at first favoured Gregory, but as he had showed himself utterly false, treacherous, and deceitful, it was proposed at a Synod in London to withdraw support from him, and transfer it to his rival, who indeed was no better. At this Synod, Repyngdon supported Gregory, and was able to turn the tide in his favour. In gratitude for this Gregory nominated him a cardinal (September 14, 1408). He had indeed solemnly promised not to make any cardinals, but he had a habit of forgetting his promises. Now the time was not yet when the king and parliament could calmly acquiesce in a Roman officer administering an English diocese. Repyngdon became an absentee, following the fortunes of his aged patron, who was deposed by the Council of Constance. Finally he resigned his see, 1419. His episcopate must be regarded as a complete failure, and though the routine work of the diocese in ordinations, etc., was carried on by deputies, yet there was no effectual superintendence, and probably a great increase in the growth of the wild opinions of the Lollards. It is remarkable that the next bishop, Flemyng, is said also to have

been originally Lollard in his opinions,¹ and, like Repyngdon, to have turned strongly against these views; though, unlike Repyngdon, he did not seek to stop them by persecution, but took the wiser course of establishing a college of theologians to combat them by argument. The two Flemyngs, one Dean, the other Bishop of Lincoln, were certainly both of them men of whom the diocese might be proud. As to the dean he is described by Leland as a distinguished man of letters. He repaired to Florence to study the classics under Baptista Guarinus, and he gave the world the opportunity of judging of his proficiency by the publication of some elegant Latin poems under the name of *Lucubrationes Tiburtinæ*. The bishop was a very leading man at Oxford, and according to Thomas Gascoigne in his Theological Dictionary, was the means of introducing a complete revolution in the disputations of the University. "The ancient method (he says) of proposing conclusions in the theological schools at Oxford was to put forward some text of the Bible in the manner of a conclusion to be disputed and argued for and against; but Doctor Richard Flemyng introduced that method which is now used, namely, that of stating four propositions, having reference to the four books of the Sentences, so as to put forward at the beginning of the discourse certain subjects from which the preacher intends to draw certain conclusions true and useful to the clergy and people." This learned theologian first became connected with the diocese of Lincoln by being appointed Vicar of Boston. Whether

¹ Anthony Wood.

Boston ever had the advantage of much of his pastoral care may be doubtful, but his Oxford reputation was sufficient to recommend him to King Henry V., who obtained from Pope Martin V. his nomination to the see of Lincoln. At this time the privileges of Chapters and free elections to sees were completely obscured. The kings of the fifteenth century found it more convenient to get their nominations made effectual by the pope than by recommending to the Chapter. Flemyng had not to seek any election in England, but, appointed by the pope, was also consecrated by him at Florence, April 28, 1420. As it appears from his after history that he strongly recommended himself to Pope Martin, the most aggressive of the popes, Flemyng must at this time have been a thorough Ultramontane.

It was in this spirit that he attended the Council of Siena, held five years after the close of the Council of Constance,—a Council which positively raged against “heretics.” Flemyng had hard work at Siena to defend the English nation from the reproaches hurled against it as the mother of heresy, and he promised that, as far as he himself was concerned, heresy should not be left in peace: His tone satisfied the Council. The pope made him his chamberlain, and he returned to England full of mighty plans for the extirpation of heresy. It is unfortunate for the reputation of a bishop, who did much good work in his day, that these plans should have included the brutal and ridiculous measure of exhuming the bones of John Wycliffe from his quiet sepulchre at Lutterworth, where they had rested for forty years, burning and

scattering them to the winds. The Council of Constance had ordered this, and the savage little clique at Siena had pressed for its execution. Bishop Flenyng was the unhappy instrument. "To Lutterworth they came," says Fuller, "sumner, commissary, official, chancellor, proctors, doctors, and servants, so that the remnant of the body would not hold out a bone among so many hands, took what was left out of the grave and burnt them to ashes, and cast them into Swift, a brook running hard by. Thus this brook conveyed the ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, these into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblems of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

And now this zealous servant of the papacy must receive some special reward from the domineering prelate, who regarded all the benefices of the English Church as completely at his disposal. In 1425, the see of York being vacant, the Dean and Chapter of York, acting under a *congé d'elire*, together with a *letter missive* directing the election of Bishop Morgan of Worcester, chose that prelate as archbishop. Letters were addressed to the pope signifying the election, and requesting his concurrence. But Pope Martin informed the Duke of Gloucester, the Protector, that he had already provided for the Archbishopric of York by translating thereto Richard Flenyng, Bishop of Lincoln. The reply of the English Government was to notify to the bishop that if he accepted the appointment the statute of *Premunire* would be put in force against him; that is, he

would be put in prison, and all his goods would be seized. This Bishop Flemyng was by no means prepared to face. After a good deal of trouble with the pope, it was arranged that he should return quietly to his own diocese, and that the penalties which he had incurred should be remitted. It was at this period that Bishop Flemyng conceived the design of founding a college in Oxford, the special design of which should be to combat by learned arguments the new school of Wycliffites, which he had once regarded with favour, but now, for a long time past, with holy horror. The licence from the Crown to incorporate divers churches in Oxford into a college, consisting of a rector and seven fellows, is dated October 13, 1427, and the work was begun, but not far advanced before the bishop's death. Forest Dean of Wells was the superintendent of the work, and Beckington, bishop of that see, a contributor; but only a partial fulfilment of the design was made, until a second Bishop of Lincoln, Thomas Rotheram, set himself to complete the work. Bishop Flemyng wrote an Introduction to the Statutes to be provided for the college, which shows his intention in founding it. He writes—

“The lips of Christian people, who formerly had not known to utter anything but the Catholic faith of Christ, now babble forth heresies and errors, and the barkings of pestiferous opinions. . . . I, Richard Flemyng, considering that in these last days the sects of the heretics are growing more than is wont, specially with a view to their extermination and destruction, have determined to erect, found and endow a certain college of theologians in the

University of Oxford, and in my diocese, to be called Lincoln College." In his own cathedral, Bishop Flemyng had great trouble from a most litigious dean, John Mackworth, who was the plague of a succession of bishops. Gascoigne mentions "the controversy between Flemyng, Bishop of Lincoln, and the haughty dean of that church, who claimed to be censured as many times as the bishop, and that if the bishop were present in the church, neither he nor any one else should begin the service before the dean entered his stall." Bishop Flemyng died at his Manor of Sleaford, January 25, 1432, and was buried in the cathedral, where his mortuary chapel, lately restored, marks the site of his grave.

The next bishop may be thought to have added some dignity to the see by being translated from London to Lincoln, but probably the very common-place motive of larger revenue was the inducement. The value of the see of Lincoln was then about twice that of London. The William Grey who thus succeeded is often confused with another William Grey, his kinsman, who became Bishop of Ely about twenty years afterwards. He succeeded to a heritage of trouble in his cathedral. The same turbulent and litigious dean who had given so much trouble to Bishop Flemyng, and had cost him so much in expensive appeals to Rome, was still vexing his Chapter and defying the authority of his ordinary. Bishop Grey attempted to settle these troubles, but he seems to have done this in too hasty and peremptory a manner, and the effect was not satisfactory. His successor annulled his ordinances and attempted a more careful

and elaborate settlement of the matters in dispute between the dean and canons.¹ Another quarrel the bishop had with one of his archdeacons, Thomas Bekyngton, Archdeacon of Bucks, who cited him into the Arches Court on a dispute about patronage. The bishop was very angry. "Blame me not," he writes to the archdeacon, "if I, another day, do as little favour to you in your jurisdiction, as it lie in my power." Upon this the archdeacon apologizes. His next trouble was with Pope Eugenius IV., who was very angry with him for appointing his kinsman, William Grey, to be Archdeacon of Northampton. The archdeaconry, according to the pope, belonged to him, as it had been vacated by the death of a cardinal. The bishop, however, declines to revoke his appointment. The three Councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basel, in which popes had been treated in somewhat of an unceremonious manner, had begun to infuse a little spirit into the clergy in resisting the papal extortions. Specially Bishop Grey would be encouraged by the antagonism evoked at Basel, which Council was then proceeding, and of which he would be duly informed by Peter Patrick the Chancellor, and Robert Burton the precentor of his cathedral, who were two of the seven deputies sent to represent the English clergy at the Council.

Bishop Grey died at Buckden, February 1436, and was buried in the eastern part of the presbytery of Lincoln Cathedral.

¹ The *Laudum* of Bishop Alnwick, which affects to regulate all the disputed points, was printed at the expense and under the care of the late Bishop Wordsworth.

In William Alnwick, the next Bishop of Lincoln, we come to a prelate who was not only an efficient ruler in his own diocese, but who also occupies a conspicuous place in the history of the country, as the tutor of the virtuous young king, his helper and adviser in the foundation of Eton and King's Colleges. He had been previously Bishop of Norwich, where he had left a good record of himself. On his translation to Lincoln, 1436, Bishop Alnwick was at once involved in trouble with the same dean who had been a thorn in the side of his two predecessors. The dean was also in internecine war with his Chapter, and the bishop at once proceeded to make a vigorous effort to settle this dispute. He induced both parties to put the matter into his hands as arbitrator, and having considered the charges brought by one against the other, he published a *Laudum*, or composition, giving decisions as to all the matters in dispute. This was fortified by an Act of Parliament passed on the morrow of St. Martin, 1439. The disputes, however, continued, and the bishop saw distinctly that so long as the statutes of the cathedral were in a state so confused as he found them, there could be no hope of peace. He therefore set himself to give an entirely new set of laws to the cathedral. This, after much careful elaboration, he produced to the Chapter on the Feast of St. Michael, 1440; but though the canons were ready to accept it, as they had beforehand promised, the dean sturdily refused, and it seems that without his consent it could not become binding law. The bishop resenting this, vented his anger on the dean. He appointed a commission, presided over by

the Dean of Christianity (the rural dean of the city), to inquire into acts of violence done by the dean. The strife continued, the dean was suspended, then excommunicated, and probably would have been deposed had not the bishop's life been cut short. Far happier must Bishop Alnwick have been in his tutorial work with the amiable young king than in these cathedral wars. In him he had a pupil who was only too eager to devote himself to study and religious exercises. He was the adviser of the prince in all his schemes for good, and especially in his design of founding at Eton "a solemn school, and an honest college of sad priests, and a great number of children to be there at his cost, frankly and freely taught the eruditaments and rules of grammar" (Hall); and in connection with this, "the building a princely college in the University of Cambridge for the erudition of those who were brought up at Eton." To this "princely college" the king, aided by Bishop Alnwick and his secretary, Bishop Beckington,¹ had given a body of statutes. But the first provost, William Millington, refused to accept these statutes on the ground that they were not in agreement with the statutes of the university. He was ultimately removed from his post, Bishop Alnwick being one of the commissioners, and a long and sharp correspondence took place between him and Bishop Beckington (given in the Beckington

¹ Beckington, Archdeacon of Bucks, who became confidential secretary to King Henry VI., was consecrated by Bishop Alnwick in the old church of Eton, which was then in course of destruction for the new collegiate church in which Beckington celebrated his first mass, when it was as yet in an unfinished state.

letters). Bishop Alnwick's *Register* supplies a detailed account of the visitation at King's.

Beckington had been Dean of the Arches Court, and in this was associated with William Lynwode, the famous author of the *Provincial*, and one of the learned men of whom the diocese of Lincoln may well be proud. William Lynwode was born at the village of that name, near Market Rasen, in Lincolnshire. His father was a wool-stapler. The son became known to Archbishop Chichele, who made him official of the Arches Court. Under Henry V. he was employed as an ambassador first to Spain, and afterwards to Portugal. In the reign of Henry VI. he was made Lord Privy Seal, and not long after Bishop of St. Davids. "He was very eminent for his skill in the Canon Law, and besides other works, which are lost, he published a celebrated book called his *Provincial*. This performance is a collection of the English ecclesiastical constitutions from Stephen Langton to Chichele inclusively. These constitutions are digested into an exact method according to the subject matter, and explained with a very learned commentary."¹

In the days of Bishop Alnwick Lollardism was more rampant than ever, and the bishops were so hated by the people that their lives were often in danger. They were accused of absolute neglect of their office—especially of preaching. To meet this Bishop Pecock preached his famous sermon at St. Paul's Cross (1447), in which he argued that preaching was not the most important work which bishops had to do.

¹ Collier, *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iii., p. 379.

His brethren were indignant—not that they were willing to become preachers, but they did not desire to be held up as formally renouncing the office. That Bishop Alnwick shared this feeling is probable, as we find him severely punishing and imprisoning in his Castle of Wallingford one of Bishop Pecock's followers. Alnwick died December 5, 1449. In his epitaph he was described as an "erector of costly buildings." One of these was the tower which he built at the bishop's house at Lincoln. He is also to be credited with the west front of Norwich Cathedral.

The successor to Bishop Alnwick was Marmaduke Lumley, a man of noble family, loaded with preferment, a great benefactor to Cambridge, holding high office in the state, but a partisan of the declining cause of the Duke of Suffolk, and opposed to the party of the Kemps. His incumbency cannot be held to have had any effect on the diocese of Lincoln, as he only held it for a year, and does not appear to have ever resided in the diocese. He died in London, and was buried in the Carthusian Priory.

He was succeeded by John Chedworth, Provost of King's College, Cambridge (1451). Chedworth was elected by the Chapter and his name signified to the pope, who had already "provided" a clerk for the see (William Grey, nephew of a former bishop), but who agreed to accept the king's nominee. During the whole of Bishop Chedworth's incumbency civil war was raging in the land. He himself was probably of the Lancastrian party, but he does not seem to have taken any prominent part in politics. Strife was also predominant among the clergy as well as among the

seculars. Bishop Pecock's bold views had caused the greatest excitement, and Chedworth was one of the assessors appointed to try him for heresy. Pecock had argued against the Lollards on grounds which were held as heretical as the Lollard opinions themselves, and he had angered the bishops by defending their abstinence from preaching. He was condemned and forced to recant (it is very difficult to understand why), and was most unjustly sentenced to a life-long imprisonment in the Abbey of Thorney. In his own diocese, Chedworth took vigorous measures against the heretics. In 1451 John Frank, Rector of Yardley Hastings, was accused of having preached against the adoration of images, and as having in his possession forbidden books (probably Wycliffe's). He confessed the truth of the charge, was excommunicated, but afterwards absolved. In 1457 William and Richard Sparke, of Somersham, in Huntingdonshire, were informed against for speaking against the worship of images. They were reported to have said—"Rather man, whose extended arms represent a cross as the true image of God, ought to be worshipped. Pilgrimages were of no avail. A child born of baptized parents need not be baptized; the baptism of the parents suffices. Lay persons are not called upon to fast. The dead need not be buried in consecrated ground. The priest has no more power to make the body of Christ than he has to make straw or reeds. Confession to a priest is needless. Prayer need not be offered in churches, but is equally valuable everywhere. Consent alone constitutes matrimony. Extreme unction, vulgarly called 'Gresyng,' only

makes a man more dirty and in worse condition. The pope is antichrist, and the priests his scholars." This probably gives a fair specimen of the Lollard opinions. That such opinions were held very slackly, and without much care for them, seems to be shown by the almost universal readiness of the Lollards to recant. The Sparkes recanted, and then the bishop prescribed their penance. Dressed only in shirt and drawers, and carrying a fagot on the shoulder, and in the right hand a lighted candle, they were to make a public confession of their evil opinions, and then to walk round the market-places of Huntingdon and St. Ives, and to appear in the procession on Sunday in the parish churches of Somersham and Ramsey, and then to offer their candles upon the altar. The next entry in the bishop's *Register* on a matter of discipline represents one Thomas Hake, of Hertford, as confessing that he had given aid, counsel, help and favour to one Thomas Curteys, who exercised and used "negromancy and heresy." Then John Padley, of Henley-on-Thames, "not lettered," abjures heresies and false opinions almost in the same terms as the Sparkes, but appears to have been treated more leniently, as his absolution is recorded without mention of any penance. Then comes a very sad story. James Wyllis, "lettered," by trade a weaver, was brought before the bishop and his assessors in 1462 at the Manor of Woburn. He acknowledged that he was acquainted with the Epistles of St. Paul and the Apocalypse and the Gospel of St. Luke in English, that he had been a scholar of one William Smyth, of Bristol, who was burned for heresy. He denied tran-

substantiation, though professing himself a devout communicant. He thought that baptism might be administered anywhere as well as in church; that images were nothing but "stocks and stones"; that purgatory had no existence, that confession to a priest was not necessary. It is specially noted that he spoke modestly (*non protervus*), and he might probably have got off with a penance, but unfortunately it came out that he had already been convicted of heresy and abjured before the Bishop of London. He was therefore held to be a relapsed heretic, and though, at the Court held August 23, he professed himself ready to abjure, he was nevertheless handed over to the secular arm, and the poor man was burned accordingly. It appears that the influence of James Wyllis had been considerable, for there are several entries in the *Register* of penances decreed to persons who had been taught by him. A curious entry follows. Hugh Bernewell, an Irishman, pretending to be a priest and promising to say prayers for any one who would pay him, at the Scala Cœli in Rome, is found to be an impostor, and made to stand in the pillory. On June 4, at Wycombe, seven men and one woman were caused to abjure; on June 5, John Brewer and twenty more of Wycombe. This seems to have been the head-quarters of Lollardism in the diocese. In September the bishop was again there, and nine more persons abjured and had penances appointed. Among other iniquities, a man named John Burn was brought before the bishop on the crime of having in his possession three English books. These were, first, a volume containing the *Life of our Lady* and of *Adam and Eve*,

The Mirror of Sinners, and *The Mirror of Matrimony*. The second, *The Tales of Canterbury*. The third, *A Play of St. Framise*. These hardly-executed MSS. were ruthlessly destroyed. It was considered an actual crime to have English books in possession, and his having written in English was one of the chief charges against Bishop Pecock. But the day of stopping the diffusion of knowledge by the destruction of MSS. was nearly over. This was the very year (1464) when Frederick Corsellis, a workman who had been employed at Haarlem by John Guthenberg, was brought by large bribes secretly to Oxford by Robert Turnour and William Caxton, and being kept under a strong guard, and continually watched to prevent his escape, was employed in teaching some persons in the University the art of printing from type.

At the Parliament of 1467 Bishop Chedworth acted for the chancellor in opening the parliament and declaring the cause for which it had been summoned. He probably therefore stood well with King Edward IV., and in the convulsions which followed and the alternate rise and fall of the Lancastrians, must have often been in considerable danger. Lincolnshire was evidently Lancastrian, as is proved by the rising of Sir Robert Wells near Stamford. This must have been distasteful to the bishop, but he did not long survive these troubles, dying November 23, 1471, and being buried in the cathedral church near to the graves of Bishops Sutton and Fleming.

The bishop who succeeded Chedworth owed his earlier promotion to Lancastrian influence, he having

been a Fellow of King's, and Master of Pembroke Hall and Chancellor of Cambridge. But as Bishop of Rochester he became a favourite of Edward IV., who made him his chaplain and the keeper of the Privy Seal. By the king's influence, on March 10, 1472, Thomas Rotheram was translated from Rochester to Lincoln. He was altogether a statesman bishop. In 1474 he was made chancellor, and continued to hold that office till the end of the reign. In this office he became extremely unpopular, as he was the originator of the system of *benevolences*, or quasi-voluntary contributions in addition to taxes. Great discontent prevailed throughout the land, and when the Parliament met in 1478, the episcopal chancellor essayed to dispel it by preaching to the assembled notables a sermon on the text, "The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing." So much was the bishop occupied in state affairs that he does not appear to have visited his diocese during the eight years he held the office. Orders were conferred by some bishop *in partibus*, of whom there always seems to have been a plentiful supply, but his *Register* does not testify to any personal work. Episcopal obligations were then differently understood, for it is certain that the bishop was a man of high character and great munificence. This latter quality was exhibited in his completion of Bishop Fleming's foundation of Lincoln College, Oxford, of which he is regarded as the second founder. The institution was incomplete and decaying when the rector and fellows bethought them of applying to Bishop Rotheram, and they did not apply in vain. He

at once took up their cause vigorously, and provided for the completion of the buildings and the necessary expenses. He also added four fellowships for the diocese of York, from which he came originally, thus making twelve fellows and a rector, of whom eight were to be of the diocese of Lincoln, four from that of York, and one from that of Bath and Wells, whose bishop (Beckington) had given £200 towards the building. In his statutes he strongly insists on the special work which the college had to do in combating the Lollard opinions, and insists on the immediate expulsion of any fellow who should become tainted with these obnoxious views. It was after his translation to the Archbishopric of York that Rotheram distinguished himself by his spirited defence of the Queen Mother Elizabeth, who had taken sanctuary to protect herself from the attacks of Richard III.

On Bishop Rotheram's translation the diocese was again unfortunate in having a statesman bishop, John Russell, who succeeded Rotheram as chancellor when the usurper Richard III. obtained the throne. Russell must have been an accomplice in those nefarious schemes which produced this result, and it is impossible to regard him with respect. When the attempt was made to give Richard a legal title to the throne by causing Parliament to pass an act which declared that he had the right of succeeding "by hereditary right and by election, coronation and consecration," it is hardly doubtful that the chancellor, Bishop Russell, had a hand in framing what Bishop Stubbs describes as "an extraordinary and clumsy expedient." Conscious, as he must have been, of the load of infamy

under which his patron lay, he must have received with equanimity the news of the result of the battle of Bosworth Field, and must have gladly relinquished the cares of state to turn to the care of his diocese. In spite of the part which he had played in supporting Richard, Bishop Russell does not seem to have stood badly with the new king, Henry VII., who spent his first Easter at Lincoln. After the festivities of the season, the king went to the north, and the bishop proceeded to the great fen monastery of Croyland, where he stayed for a month, "settling the charges every week for himself and twenty persons in such a manner as both sides were content." While at Croyland he settled the appropriation by the monastery of Peterborough of the church of Brinkhurst or Eton, reserving a sufficient stipend for a year, and providing for the procurations of the Chapter of Lincoln, the Archdeacon of Leicester, and the bishop. In the year 1488, King Henry, attended by the Bishop of Lincoln, made a visit to Oxford. The bishop had been four years previously elected as Chancellor of the University. Hitherto this had been an annual appointment of some conspicuous person in the University. The appointment of a bishop marked a change in the *régime* and necessitated the appointment of a deputy or vice-chancellor. At Oxford, the visit of the king was attended with much ceremonial, and some practical benefits flowed from it. The church of St. Mary, which had lain long in a ruinous condition, was taken in hand for restoration. The bishop was no doubt a contributor to the work, as his arms on the north side of the west door of the church

testify. In the year after the king's visit there fell out a great and bitter dissension among the townspeople at Oxford as to the election of a mayor. The defeated party, desiring to revenge themselves, endeavoured to get enrolled amongst the members of the University, that they might use its privileges against their opponents. The chancellor, perceiving the danger, wrote to warn the University against accepting them, and thus prevented a serious mischief. In the next year he had before him the curious case of the robbery of one religious house by another. The cellarer of the Abbey of Abingdon stole "divers precious goods" belonging to the abbey, and made off with them to the house of Austin Friars in Oxford. The Abbot of Abingdon followed him there, but the dishonest monk was concealed by the friars. Then the bishop intervened, and apprehended the monk, committing him, together with the prior, sub-prior, and one of the canons of the Austin house, to prison. Several of the bishop's predecessors had laboured in various ways to suppress the Lollardism still so prevalent. Bishop Russell determined to set forth a work which should finally crush them. In the preface to the manuscript he says—"I, John Russell, Bishop of Lincoln, being this year 1491 fatigued and vexed at Oxford by many heretics, after that there came into my hands the book of brother Thomas Waldensis, the venerable doctor, against the Wycliffists, whose most insane opinions have infected many of the people in our Anglican Church, formed the design of making some extracts from that book, viz. from the part on

'sacramentals,' against which the Lollards themselves especially inveigh. By doing this our successors and their assistant advisers in inquiries into heretical pravity may find some more ready helps to bring confusion upon the erring, than we had before, and than they would have had, had not these things been provided. Let these books therefore remain in the Registry of the Bishop of Lincoln, whosoever he may be for the time. Whosoever shall efface this let him be anathema." At the end of the work there is written—"Let him who will, apply himself to the remainder of the work. It is enough for me to have brought these eight parts into the compendium from the many authorities which have been heaped together in eight weeks. I would do more if time and my health allowed." Bishop Russell died at his Manor of Nettleham, Jan. 30, 1495, and was buried in the chantry chapel which he himself had erected in the cathedral. He was a considerable benefactor to the Church, having rebuilt the episcopal house at Buckden, and a great part of St. Martin's church at Stamford. He also founded a chantry and two obits or doles, one to be distributed on the day of his death, and the other on that of his friend Thomas Fitzwilliam of Mablethorpe.

CHAPTER VIII

FROM BISHOP SMITH TO BISHOP LONGLAND, 1495—1547

IN Bishop William Smith, translated from Lichfield and Coventry, the diocese of Lincoln obtained a munificent and energetic prelate, who had already made his mark as a disciplinarian, and who did not shrink from the abundant work needing to be done in his new diocese. His biographer (Mr. Churton) thus describes the diocese of Lincoln as it appeared to him when he wrote, now nearly a century ago—“The see of Lincoln, which is still the largest in extent of jurisdiction, reaching from the Thames to the Humber, was in many respects, when Smith was translated to it, one of the most splendid in the kingdom. In the minster, which justly ranks among the most beautiful and magnificent of our cathedrals, were stalls for seventy dignitaries, according to the second order of our Lord’s disciples, a number surpassing that of any other cathedral in England. Of all these dignities, the deanery and six residentiaries excepted, the bishop was the patron, and his estates and revenues were ample in proportion to the magnitude of his diocese, for he had forty manors and ten

palaces. Four of these, besides the Palace of Lincoln and Lincoln Place in Southampton Buildings, London, were frequently honoured with the presence of Bishop Smith; Sidington, in Rutland; Buckden, in Huntingdonshire; Woburn, Buckinghamshire; and Banbury Castle, Oxfordshire. He chose without doubt those places for his residence, because by their advantageous situation he was best enabled to superintend the several parts of his vast diocese." Bishop Smith began his work at Lincoln, as he had done at Lichfield, by visiting and regulating the condition of the monasteries, which at that time were urgently in need of reform. The Abbey of Oseney was in a very disordered state, both as to finances and discipline. The bishop undertook the work of reformation there, and issued a body of injunctions for its discipline. In the year 1500, during the prevalence of the plague in England, Bishop Smith's *Register* bears witness to the fact that he ordered solemn processions to be made and prayers to be offered for the removal of the scourge, giving an indulgence of forty days to all who should take part in the processions, if accompanied by contrition and confession of sin. The place of all others in his diocese which needed the bishop's care was the cathedral, which was full of rampant abuses. A very long and minute account of the visitation held by him, March 29, 1501, is preserved in the *Register*,¹ and exhibits in a striking manner the enormous abuse due to papal dispensations, and licences bought at Rome.

¹ Read by the writer before the British Archæological Society at their meeting in Lincoln.

It appears that the dean, George Fitzhugh, obtained a licence from the pope to hold a deanery at *sixteen years* of age; another licence to be ordained priest before he was twenty-three; another to hold three mutually incompatible benefices together; others for the annexation of certain canonries to the benefices held by him. Many of the canons had similar letters of dispensation to exhibit, though not in such great abundance as the dean. Then came some sharp complaints of malversation of funds, and some graver scandals, namely, gambling and incontinency were alleged against the priest-vicars, and chantry priests. But the most extraordinary charge was that against the servants of the dean and residentiaries, namely, that they were in the habit of breaking the cathedral windows with discharges from their crossbows, and of shooting their arrows into the leaden roof of the building. The church was in an exceedingly bad state of repair, and the bishop authorized an appeal being made to the public. As regards the abuses which had been revealed, the bishop issued a schedule of injunctions from the Castle of Banbury, April 20, 1501, and by a Chapter act of more than two years afterwards some of them are said to have been abated. At that time there were in the cathedral thirty-two chantry priests, nine poor clerks, seven choristers, eleven officers of the church, fifteen priest-vicars, nine lay-vicars. In Bishop Smith's time Lollardism continued to increase and grow, and John Foxe has some very damaging things to say of the bishop's persecuting zeal, only we unfortunately cannot depend on the accuracy of his statements, which were avowedly

built on hearsay. According to Foxe, one Thomas Chase, having been often summoned before the bishop and lectured by him without result, was committed to the bishop's prison called Little Ease, and was there visited by the bishop's chaplains, who endeavoured to convert him. Thomas Chase, however, proved obdurate, and then the account says that he was most "cruelly strangled and pressed to death," while the report was spread that he had hanged himself. A still worse story is told against the bishop of the treatment of William Tylsworth at Amersham, who was burned to death; his daughter, Joan Clark, being compelled to set fire to the wood which burned him. There is strong reason for disbelieving this story, which is given as from hearsay, Foxe himself having pronounced a favourable estimate of Bishop Smith's proceedings. "This William Smith, although he was somewhat eager and sharp against the poor simple flock of Christ's servants, under whom some were burned, many abjured, a great number molested; yet he was nothing so bloody and cruel as was the said Longland which afterwards succeeded in that diocese. For so I find of him that in the time of the great abjuration and troublesome affliction of Buckinghamshire men, where many were abjured and certain burned, yet divers he sent quietly home without punishment or penance, bidding them go home and live as good Christians should do. And many which were enjoined penance before, he did release." One important part of the diocese of Bishop Smith, the University of Oxford, of which he was chancellor, was in a state of great decadence and disorder during

his episcopate. We learn from the Oxford historian that it was in a miserable condition in learning, finances, and morals. Successive attacks of the plague had almost depopulated it. A great part of the halls were unoccupied, and the colleges were oppressed with poverty; Greek was hardly known, and all that the students seemed to care for was "querks and sophistry." The old learning was falling altogether into disrepute and contempt; the new learning had not yet begun to show its power. Senseless quarrels between North and South distracted the students. There was even a talk among men in power of abolishing the University altogether. Bishop Smith may have done something towards improving matters, but the fact of his resignation of the chancellorship, after holding it only three years, seems to show that he was not very hopeful. In one respect, indeed, he was most ready to aid. He gave handsome benefactions to Oriel, of which he was visitor, and to Lincoln College, where he had been educated, but he far surpassed these by his splendid foundation, in conjunction with Mr. Sutton, of the King's Hall and College of Brasenose, which was destined in its after history to prove so valuable a limb of the University body. The diocese may have been fairly attended to by the bishop, his suffragan Bishop Bothe, and his commissaries, but Bishop Smith's employments as President of the Council of Wales, and as a constant attendant at Court, must have greatly interfered with his personal work in its supervision. He had the pleasure of conveying the pall to Archbishop Warham, whom he had ordained and promoted, and the

melancholy office of performing the funeral rites for the young Prince Arthur, and his father, King Henry VII.

In the very famous man who succeeded Bishop Smith, the diocese of Lincoln can claim but a small share. It is true that Thomas Wolsey had been Dean of Lincoln for six years before being promoted to the see, but as the deanery was given to him as a reward for diplomatic service, and as he quickly became Rector of Torrington, Canon of Windsor, Prebendary and Dean of York, Dean of Hereford, and Precentor of St. Paul's, probably not much time was left for Lincoln. Wolsey was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln, March 26, 1514, making all haste, as Cavendish tells us, that he might lay hands on the costly vestments and other goods left by Bishop Smith, and many of which he had devised to his new college in Oxford. "Wolsey," says Cavendish, "found the means that he gat possession of all his predecessor's goods into his hands, whereof I have divers times seen some part which furnished his house." The principal thing, therefore, which the diocese of Lincoln owes to the great cardinal is the spoliation of the cathedral, and the robbery of all that he could lay hands on. In a few months, however, the great pluralist was gone from Lincoln (November 1514), and the arch-diocese of York had the benefit of his supervision.

The next occupant of the see, William Atwater, had gained a high reputation at Oxford, but owed probably his continuous flow of preferment to the friendship of Wolsey, with whom he had been a

brother-fellow at Magdalen. His preferments were something marvellous. He was Dean of the Chapel Royal, Dean of Salisbury, Prebendary of Wells, St. Davids, Windsor, and Salisbury, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, Archdeacon of Lewes, Fellow of Eton, Rector of Hawkbridge, Pedylington and Dychet. To his twelve pieces of preferment, Atwater added the see of Lincoln, November 12, 1514. He was not a persecuting bishop; Foxe has nothing to allege against him. He was, perhaps, rather inclined to favour the reforming party, then becoming powerful. He had due episcopal views as to enforcing discipline in his diocese, as his Visitation Book shows. We learn from Dugdale that he gave some handsome vestments to the cathedral, probably to replace those which Wolsey had carried away, and out of regard to the working people in his diocese, he made an order that all dedication festivals of churches which fell about harvest-time should be celebrated on October 3. His great visitation of the monasteries in his diocese took place in 1518, commencing in April and continuing till the end of July. Of this a Record remains in a MS. book in the Registry of Lincoln. The Record contains many curious particulars. In many of the houses it was found that no accounts were kept, that the brethren or sisters knew nothing about the property of the house, that the houses were much in debt, that sometimes the superior did not live in the house, that the services were irregularly attended, that secular persons often were domiciled in the houses. Some graver matters of immorality are noted, as at Stainfield Nunnery, where it is said—"The nuns stay

so long drinking together after compline, that they can't get up to matins, and if they do get up they do not sing, but are given up to sleep." At Littlemore Nunnery a fearful state of things is noted. "The nuns in this nunnery," writes the bishop, "live in lasciviousness, and are all disobedient and obstinate." A certain Juliana Wynter had given birth to a child. The prioress had her little daughter openly with her in the convent, and was visited from time to time by a certain Richard Heynes, a chaplain, who lived with her as his wife. The house was ruinous, the money and jewels gone. A girl who wished to enter "religion" had been frightened away by the iniquities which she discovered. At Eynsham Abbey it was noted that many of the brethren were bad characters, that drunkenness and fighting were common.

The successor of Bishop Atwater, John Longland (1521), found equally serious causes of complaint against some of the religious houses in the diocese. It will be necessary to quote this bishop's injunctions at some length, as they throw great light upon the state of the monasteries just previous to the Suppression. In the reaction against the exaggerated statements of Bishop Bale and others, and the gross charges found in the *Comperda*, it is often now attempted to represent the monasteries of the sixteenth century as havens of peace, devotion, and regular living. An acquaintance with the real facts of the case will show this to be a delusion. These facts can nowhere be found in so reliable a form as in the Registers of the bishops, who were called to supervise these establishments, to inquire into their way of life, and to give directions.

for the removal of abuses. If the truth is not to be found here, we shall look for it in vain. The bishop whose words we shall quote was a very able man, and one by no means disposed to favour the reforming movement. Indeed, he is represented by Foxe as a notorious persecutor of Lollards, though as the quotations of his doings in this respect given by the Martyrologist are from a Register which is non-existent, and as the authenticity of them is doubtful, we shall not further refer to them. Nor is it necessary; as from the genuine letters printed in Ellis's Collection we find the bishop urging Cardinal Wolsey to take strong repressive measures against the Lutherans, advice to which the cardinal was not very ready to agree.

Bishop Longland was the king's confessor and spiritual director, and is sometimes accused of having put the first scruples into Henry's head as to his marriage with Catherine. He was necessarily much about the Court, but he did not fail to have a vigilant eye on his diocese. Thus we find him writing to Archbishop Warham strongly urging him to cause his relative, the parson of Tring, to appoint a curate to Wigginton, "which hath of old time been a priest's church, as by its records doth openly appear." To the Dean of Lincoln he writes, telling him that in the visitation he was about to hold of the peculiars of the cathedral, he was to take order among the prebendaries for the "building and maintaining of their churches and houses, and corrections there to be done, that if ye will not I must and will supply the duty. I assure you now there is more misliving

committed within jurisdiction of my prebends, than in much part of my diocese besides ; but I mistrust not your diligency therein at this your visitation, and that you will sharply and groundely look thereon for your discharge." Then the bishop continues—"Brother Dean, inasmuch as my cathedral church hath not so many residentiaries as in old time hath been accustomed to the maintenance of the honour of God there and of that church, whereby households there are fewer in number, and households within the same close decay and fall in ruins, with many other inconveniences that ensueth of the same : and moreover the four dignitaries of my church ought to be resident there, and personally there to make their abode ; and for that the Treasurer next unto the Dean hath the most care and charge, and specially ought there to be, and hath of a long season been absent from the said church, whereby many things are more out of order in the same, and it shall be much more comfortable to you all and relief unto your pains many ways in the burden of the church to have a substantial wise man that can and will take pains, as well in all causes concerning the church as of his office, in consideration whereof with many other things me moving in these premises, I have given the office of Treasurership to Mr. Richard Parkar, which now cometh to you to be installed."¹ This proceeding of the bishop in summarily ejecting the non-resident treasurer, and appointing one of his own selection, seems to be somewhat arbitrary, but no doubt the cathedral authorities found themselves obliged to

¹ Longland's *Memorandum Register*, MS. Lincoln.

accept it. It was easier dealing with them than it was with religious bodies which were fortified by papal exemptions and privileges, but the bishop did not hesitate to attack these also. The Cistercian House of Thame Park, founded originally by Alexander Bishop of Lincoln, had become notorious for licence and profligacy, relying probably on its exemption from diocesan control, the White Monks being only amenable to a superior of their own order. Bishop Longland was therefore obliged to endeavour to effect the correction of the house through him. The superior was the Abbot of Waverley, near Farnham, the mother house of the Order in England. To him, therefore, the bishop sent a list of articles charging the abbot and monks of Thame with all sorts of corruption and malversation.

The Abbot of Waverley considered the matter and made investigations, and then made a reply to the bishop on which Longland comments as follows—
 “An abbot ignorant and useless is tolerated and excused. The religious life which has been altogether violated is not rescued. The few goods of the monastery which remain from the store which was formerly most ample will soon be consumed unless some remedy be provided. No provision is made for paying off the loans which have been received. An equal if not greater necessity for a loan is now pressing. The misconduct of the abbot and brethren, which are matters of public notoriety, and cannot be concealed by any shifty excuses, remain unpunished. Seeing then that by the rights of my church of Lincoln I stand in the place of the founder of this

monastery, I cannot permit that this house situate within the limits of my diocese, formerly adorned with holy and religious men, endowed with ample possessions, and built for the very purpose that holiness of life, devout religion, regular observance and the performance of the holy offices should be constantly and unceasingly preserved there, should now under a bad shepherd and irreligious flock go to desolation. Let your fatherhood therefore look to it, and that carefully, and without fraud or connivance, that these things which by the constitution of the fathers ought to be done may be introduced with a fitting and due reformation, or certainly I myself, without any aid from you, will devise a remedy, and if you choose to deviate to such an extent from the ordinances of the holy fathers that this our monastery cannot be restored by Bernardines living monastically, I will dedicate their possessions to some other use more acceptable to God." This was written many years before the suppression of the monasteries was contemplated ; but the words are ominous, and coming as they do from the king's confessor, seem to suggest the possibility of the advent of troublous times for the monasteries. Nor did the temper with which the bishop regarded the religious houses improve as he went on in his work. A few years later the bishop writes to the abbess and convent of Ullestowe that in his visitation he had found "divers things worthy of reformation." First, that the order of the Rule of St. Benedict was not observed "in keeping the frater at meal-times, where the sisters should be well fed spiritually at meal-times with Holy Scripture as bodily with meat, but

customarily they resort to a certain place within the monastery called the household, where much insolency is used contrary to the good rules of the said religion, by reason of the resort of seculars, both men, women and children, and other inconveniences have thereby ensued." Next the bishop gives minute directions as to the enclosure of the nuns by doors shut and barred at certain times; that the abbess is not to be "led by the arm" by secular persons in the processions; that she is to get up at night to attend matins; that she is not to breakfast with the steward; that no nuns should presume to wear their apparels on their heads under such lay fashion as they have late done with cornered crests, neither under such manner of height, showing their foreheads more like lay people than religious; that none of the sisters do use or wear hereafter any such voided shoes, neither crested as they have of late been used, and that their gowns and kyrtles be close before, and not so deep voided at the breast, and no more to use red stomachers with other sad colours of the same. These injunctions represent a considerable decadence of discipline, if nothing worse. In the convent of Nun Cottam it appears the services were not properly said, but done "with great festination, haste, and without devotion." This was to be amended. The bishop proceeds—"And I likewise charge you, Lady Prioress, that ye suffer no more hereafter any Lord of Misrule to be within your house, neither suffer hereafter any such disguising as in time past hath been used in your monastery, in nuns apparel or otherwise. And from henceforth ye do no more burden and charge your house with such a number of

your kinsfolk as ye have in time past used, and from henceforth ye suffer none of your chaplains to have in their keeping the key of the church. And for as much as by your negligent sufferance divers of your sisters have wandered abroad into the world, some under pretence of pilgrimage, some to see men friends and otherwise, whereby hath grown many inconveniences, insolent behaviour and much slander, the prioress being content if six have been present (at the services), the residue to go at liberty where they would ; some at Thornton, some at Newsum, some at Hull, some at other places, at their pleasure, which is in the sight of good men abominable, high displeasure to God, rebuke, shame, and reproach to religion. Also we charge you, Lady Prioress, under pain of excommunication, that ye henceforth no more suffer Sir John Ward, Sir Richard Calverley, Sir William Johnson, nor the parson of Skotton, nor Sir William Steele to come within the precincts of your monastery. And that ye void out of your house Robert Lawrence, and he no more to resort to the same. And that ye straight upon sight hereof diminish the number of your servants both men and women, which excessive number that ye keep of them both is one of the chief causes of your miserable poverty. And that ye suffer no men children to be brought up or taught within your monastery, nor to resort to any of the sisters, neither to lie within your monastery, nor any person young or old to lie within your dortour, but only religious women, and every sister to lie alone according to the laws. And the door of the said dortour nightly to be shut, and light nightly to burn in the

same. And for as much as ye have in time past sold the goods of your house, viz. a bowl ungilt, plain, with a cover; one other gilt with a cover; two bowls white without covers; one agnus of gold, one buckle of gold, one chalice, one macer, and many other things, I charge and command you under pain of privation that ye no more sell plate and jewels of your house from henceforth without licence of your ordinary." The bishop concludes with a general and most earnest exhortation for the amendment of all these irregularities, which certainly represent the monastery as in a state of utter indiscipline and licence. In the famous nunnery of Studley very much the same sort of things prevailed. The bishop here forbids the nuns being godmothers to any children and attending christenings, and that the sisters are not to be allowed to go out of the house to visit their kinsfolk and friends, by which "much insolency hath been used in religion," and that strangers are not to be brought into the monastery, that no corrodies are to be granted, and that the number of servants is to be diminished.

We now turn to the dealings of Bishop Longland with the houses of Austin Canons in his diocese, of which we have two notable examples in his *Register*. To the House of St. Mary-in-the-Meadows, Leicester, he has to write with great severity. The abbot was so notoriously careless of his duties that he had not said a Mass for three years, and that on solemn days he had not been present in the convent for ten years to celebrate a high Mass. The following charge against the abbot is so remarkable that we give a

literal translation of the Injunctions—"Also, inasmuch as according to the virtue of the regular observance, abbots and other religious prelates ought to give to those under them an example of good life and gravity of morals, inasmuch as that which is done by prelates is easily drawn by others to be a precedent, you however, Abbot, not giving to your brethren an example of staidness and gravity, but an occasion of levity, mirth, and abandonment, have had and still have a certain fool or buffoon continually to consort with you, who walks before you every day when you go to church, and in the choir, when you are there, plays his fool's tricks (*se stolidé exercet*) with words, scoffs, and songs, and in other ways, manifestly giving to the canons in the choir an occasion for laughter and disorder, contrary to religious and regular observance; also disturbing and hindering the divine offices to the great scandal of religion and your own not slight disgrace and danger. Therefore we enjoin thee, Lord Abbot, that henceforth you do not permit this same fool to go before you in the church, either in the choir or cloister, nor to be among the brethren at the times of divine service in any way." The bishop enjoins that the canons are not to be allowed to stray about the country as they pleased, and brother Broughton is ordered not to introduce women into his chamber, and specially not to admit the wife of Edward Bathfeld, and he himself is to be confined to the house until he receive permission to go forth. In like manner brother Lichfield is restrained from bringing women of bad character into the monastery, "from which great scandal has

arisen," and from resorting to the houses of women in Leicester; and a general order is given that no women are to be allowed in the monastery except to attend the services in the church. A similar order is given to the Austin Canons' house at Dorchester, where it is said great scandal has arisen from the resort of women under pretence of being washerwomen, but no special instances are here mentioned, the bishop being content with saying that both by public fame and by his own visitatorial inquiries, he had found certain things in the monastery which specially needed reformation. At Missenden the brethren are said to be very ignorant. They had their private keys, and strangers from without came and went as they pleased. The house was filthily kept, and much in debt. The brethren "lived lasciviously," and wandered about the country as well by day as night. Some other notices by this bishop of the "religious" are furnished by the State Papers. The Abbot of Peterborough was living in fornication. At Dunstable but little religion was kept, and the house was in utter decay. Upon the whole the picture of the monasteries to be gathered from Bishop Longland's utterances is a very damaging one.

The diocese was necessarily affected by the great changes resulting from the rejection of papal supremacy, and on this the Bishop's *Register* furnishes us with some important information. He sent round to all the clergy in his diocese a letter in English to be read by them to the people at the time of Mass, which ran as follows—"Ye shall understand that the unlawful jurisdiction, power, and authority, of long time

usurped by the bishop of Rome in this realm, who then was called Pope, is now by God's law justly, lawfully, and upon good grounds, reasons, and causes, by authority of Parliament, and by and with the whole consent and agreement of all the bishops, prelates, and both the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and also the whole clergy of this realm, extinct and ceases for ever, and of no value or effect in this realm of England; and the King's Highness is acknowledged to be supreme head on earth immediately under God of the Church of England; so ought every Christian subject of this realm not only to knowledge and obediently recognize him to be supreme head on earth of the Church of England, but also to speak, publish, and teach their children and servants the same, and to show them how the said bishop has heretofore usurped, not only upon God, but also upon princes of this realm and their progenitors. Wherefore to the intent ye should better believe me, and take and receive the truth as ye ought to do, I declare this unto you, not only of myself which I know to be true, but also declare that the same is certified unto me by the mouth of my ordinary, the Bishop of Lincoln, under his seal, which I have here ready to show you."

Then follows a Latin letter instructing the clergy to see that the schoolmasters taught their scholars the same things, and that the necessary alterations were made in the wording of the Great Curse and the Service Books. Soon after this the bishop sent to his archdeacons Cranmer's letter, *De modo prædicandi et in sermonibus orandi*, with directions as follows—"I commend me unto you and send you certain writings

de modo prædicandi et in sermonibus orandi, which every Bishop hath in commandment to cause it to be showed and notified to the clergy of his Diocese, as well to secular as regulars, exempt and not exempt, with speed, and by them to be put in execution according to the tenor thereof; and if ye shall know any person refuse this order, and give notice thereof unto me, send ye forth your apparitors that they may call every Deanery by themselves, and when they do appear, read ye it openly to them, and if any person will have the copy thereof, let him have it. Ye must have there at the best, all the heads or seniors of any religious house of men, and the priests of religious houses of women. These said writings that I now send you are subscribed *manibus episcoporum*. This cause ye to be done speedily throughout your office, and offer an example of these writings to every priest that will write them out."

It appears, however, that the bishop was not satisfied with the way in which these directions had been received and obeyed. For in the *Register*, immediately after the above, there occurs the following—"I commend me in hearty wise unto you, and when I sent you the last year my letter with certain writings enclosed therein *de modo prædicandi et in sermonibus orandi*, with many other instructions in the same, which I doubt not ye have in your good remembrance, and also in your knowledge, commanding you to give notice and knowledge thereof unto all the clergy within your archdeaconry, as well exempt as non-exempt, and if ye did know any person to refuse that order or otherwise behave himself, to

give me knowledge thereof. Yet that commandment notwithstanding, I am informed that some temerous, presumptuous, and indiscreet persons there be, within your office, that doth to the contrary, and doth treat and dispute such matters and doubts as doth rather gender contrariety and difference than necessary things apt for the audience or for the increase of virtue and truth, and many of them not authorized to preach, and yet are by you and the curates permitted and suffered contrary to the said commandment. In consideration whereof I charge you to have such an eye, diligent oversight and inquiry into these premisses, that I may with speed be certified the names as well of all such as have transgressed the said order and commandment, as of them who do preach any contentions or doubtful matters, or without authority, and also of all such curates as doth admit or suffer any such not authorized persons to preach within their churches, and all such as set forth the Bishop of Rome his usurped jurisdiction and authority, if any such there be. To the intent such transgressors may be known and ordered accordingly, and that to give effectual commandments to all curates from henceforth to note in a bill the names of any other that shall hereafter preach in their churches, and by whose authority they come, and how they do use themselves in their sermons, and to certify you by these writings once every term, and you to send unto me or my chancellor your said certificates to the intent it may be known how every one doth use themselves. This fail not to do with speed, as ye will answer thereunto."

It is evident from this that the diocese was not very

willing to accept the Royal Supremacy and to abjure the pope, and the great Lincolnshire rising which followed very quickly after the dispatch of these letters confirms this view. The *Calendar of State Papers* recently published gives us the fullest information as to this rising, which was only second in importance to the Pilgrimage of Grace, which originated in Yorkshire.

On Sunday, October 1, 1536, a large number of the parochial clergy had assembled at Louth, having heard of the approach of the Royal Commissioners charged with completing the suppression of the smaller monasteries, and also of the Registrar of the Bishop of Lincoln, with books to assess their benefices for the payment of the subsidy due from the clergy. The assembled clergy organized a determined resistance. It was said that the king intended to rob all the churches of their "jewels," and to pull down churches, only allowing one for every five miles. The parsons promised contributions of money—one parson contributing £40, another £10. A leader was appointed, one Nicholas Melton, a cobbler. On Monday, October 2, the insurrection began. John Heneage, the Royal Commissioner for the suppression, was assaulted, and obliged to fly for his life to the church at Louth. John Frank, the Registrar, had his books taken from him and burned before his eyes. Both were obliged to take the oath "to be true to God and king." "All the priests, both of town and country, were sworn to ring the common bells, and bring all their parishioners with them on the morrow to a hill eight miles towards Castre" (Caistor). The

commissioners for collecting the subsidy had appointed to sit at Caistor on that day. They were interrupted by the arrival of a vast mob, and plainly told that no money would be paid. The commissioners fled, but some of them fell into the insurgents' hands, and were badly treated. Lord Burgh having escaped, they hanged his servant.

The insurgents now formulated their grievances and dispatched them to the king. They were (1) The suppression of so many religious houses. (2) The Act of Uses, restraining the subjects' liberty in the declaration of their wills. (3) The tax of the fifteenth against which they pleaded poverty. (4) The ill counsellors of mean birth whom the king had about him. (5) That divers bishops had subverted the faith. (6) The jewels and plate of parish churches were in danger of being taken as they had lately been taken from religious houses. They pray the king to call around him the nobility of the realm, and to take such steps that they might acknowledge him to be the governor and supreme head of the Church of England, which office they acknowledge to be his by right and inheritance, and they desire the king should have the tenths and first-fruits of all benefices above the value of £20, and of all others where the incumbents do not keep residence.

At the same time that the Caistor mob were engaged in their violent proceedings, a still more serious riot was taking place at Horncastle. The chancellor of the diocese, Dr. Raynes, had been holding a visitation at Bolingbroke, a neighbouring village, and was lying sick in bed. He was sent for, dragged forth

and brutally murdered at Hotncastle, being beaten with clubs by the mob, while the parsons and vicars shouted, "Kill him, kill him!" The mob also hanged one Wolsey, principally it would seem because of his name. Having now constructed a banner, on which were painted the five wounds of Christ, a chalice with the host, a plough, a horn, they marched forward to Lincoln. Dr. Makarel, Abbot of Barlings and Suffragan Bishop of Lincoln, now became their leader. The insurgents desired to advance, but the gentlemen among them persuaded them to remain at Lincoln till the king's answer to their grievances was received. A great quarrel arose; the gentlemen who met for counsel in the Chapter-house had to defend their lives by arms. When the king's answer arrived, it was most bitter and contemptuous. He ordered them to disperse to their homes, and give up the ringleaders to justice. As the forces of the Duke of Suffolk were approaching, they did as they were commanded, leaving Abbot Makarel, Lord Hussey and some others to suffer the extreme vengeance of the king. After this insurrection Bishop Longland must have been extremely unpopular in his diocese. Perhaps it was for that reason that after the death of Dr. Makarel he appointed two suffragan bishops to act for him, who were described as the Bishops of Askelon and Philadelphia.

During the troublous time of the remainder of the reign of Henry VIII. it is probable that the diocese of Lincoln suffered as much as other parts of the country from the wayward and varying caprices of the sovereign, who sacrificed men at one time for denying

his supremacy, and at another for refusing to accept the Six Articles. There is nothing to lead us to believe that the bishop was averse to these prosecutions, although the charges made by Foxe may not be capable of being substantiated. His *Register* gives us an account of the case of Thomas Hardyng, who was treated as a relapsed heretic, and handed over to the secular arm to be burned. In the case of a more famous man, John Fryth, the bishop was directly concerned, as he was one of the three bishops appointed to try him at Croydon, and shared the responsibility of that atrocious sentence which condemned this promising young scholar to the flames because he would not allow that the Host might properly be worshipped.¹ But the most famous martyr of this period in the diocese of Lincoln was certainly Anne Ayscough, a lady of a good Lincolnshire family, married in early life to Mr. Kyme, a Lincolnshire gentleman, but who being badly treated by her husband on account of her reforming views, had left him and repaired to the Court, where she was protected by Queen Catherine Parr. The record of her repeated examinations, her sufferings on the rack, which was sometimes worked by the hands of Lord Chancellor Wriothsley himself, and finally of her burning, are among the most horrible things of this most horrible period, and whatever part the bishop may have had in this judicial murder cannot have been a very pleasing matter of reflection to him. Longland's share

¹ "If you will grant and publish but this one proposition, that it ought not to be worshipped, I promise you that I will never write against it."—Fryth to More.

in the reforming movement seems to have been limited to violent orations against the pope and his enormities. One of the most remarkable of these was in a sermon preached before the king at Greenwich (1538), in which he declaims with great power against the papal claims—"Beware then, Bishop of Rome, and be content with thine own Diocese, thine own charge, as other bishops are—a marvellous blindness in thee to take upon thee to answer for all the world, and art not able to answer our great Bishop Christ for thyself at the dreadful day of Judgment." Bishop Longland's life, which was extended into 1547, seems to furnish a connecting link between the old state of things and the commencement of a new order. During the twenty-five years of his incumbency he had seen many changes in the status of the Church of England, but he would have been greatly surprised if, towards the end of his incumbency, he had been told that he was any less a bishop of the ancient Church of England than he had been at the beginning. During this and the following reigns, when changes were still more violent, there was no severance of continuity in the Church, but only the gradual process of cleansing, often producing great commotion, but never anything approaching to disruption or severance in the life of the Church.

CHAPTER IX

THE MEDIÆVAL MONASTERIES OF THE DIOCESE OF
LINCOLN

BEFORE we proceed to consider the state of the diocese under the changed condition of affairs brought about by the Reformation, it would be well to take a survey of the "religious" houses in the diocese during the Middle Age, and to estimate their influence upon Church life. As regards the population which surrounded them, their influence was probably not very great. In proportion as they were observant of their rules the monks were rigidly cut off from all intercourse with the outer world, and when the friars came on the scene the zeal and devotion which they at first showed appear soon to have grown cold; while their mendicant habits served to exasperate many against them, and gave birth to those bitter satires of their habits which were so rife. There was one matter connected with the religious houses which certainly was almost an unmixed evil to the Church life of the diocese, viz. the impropriation of tithes. In the life of Bishop Hugh de Wells the vast number of vicarages which the monasteries were compelled to

settle has been spoken of; but even when the vicarage was settled the parish still suffered, from the fact of the greater part of the revenues of the Church being carried off to the monastery. Another evil which these houses inflicted on the Church was their readiness to *farm* livings for foreign incumbents, thus upholding and assisting one of the most crying mischiefs of the Middle Age. Yet with these drawbacks no doubt there were benefits to the community in the establishment of monasteries. They were a civilizing influence in a rude and barbarous age. If they did not do much in instruction, they yet had considerable effect on the characters of the rough nobles and gentry, and by their cultivation of land and the employment of a great many servants and labourers they were a substantial help to the labouring population. The earlier Bishops of Lincoln were very severe in the treatment of monasteries. On account of his compelling them to establish so many vicarages in their impropriate benefices Hugh de Wells is called by Matthew Paris *malleus monachorum*, and nothing can be stronger than the language in which he denounces Bishop Grosseteste's visitatorial proceedings. That these were sufficiently severe may be inferred from the fact that in his first visitation Grosseteste removed from their places no less than seven abbots and four priors. These were the Abbots of Leicester, Owston, Thornton, Nubley, Bourne, Dorchester, and Messenden, and the Priors of St. Frydeswide, Coldnorton, Bradwell, and De la Launde. The bishop was determined to enforce at any cost a strict observance of the rules of the Order to which the

communities belonged, and the extreme severity with which he visited some of the houses of nuns amounted even to cruelty. There was one class of religious houses on which Bishop Grosseteste was especially severe, viz. the *alien* monasteries, which were dependencies of some great foreign monastery which had acquired land in England, and placed a colony of its members upon its estates, who were nominally bound to conform to the rules of the mother house. Grosseteste found these, of which there were ten in the county of Lincoln alone, in a most disordered condition. There was at Minting a priory and monks in connection with a Benedictine monastery on the Loire, in which the bishop found the most grievous scandals. He writes indignantly to the abbot of the parent house—"You send us from your monastery to the cell of Minting in our diocese men who live licentiously with harlots; men who have separate funds of their own; disobedient, given up to debauchery, drunkenness, and amusements, and who are not ashamed to eat flesh even four days a week. Therefore, although your way of life in your own house be according to the rule which you have professed, yet in this which I have mentioned there is a notable stain upon you. I have expelled from the aforesaid house one Philip for fornication, possessing property, disobedience, vagabondage, eating flesh against the rule, of all which offences he has been judicially convicted. I have expelled also Theobald and Walrond and Gerard for like offences, and for being such open and enormous transgressors against the observance of their rule as to be the scandal and

song of the whole country."¹ Another class of houses which must have given great trouble to the bishop was the *cells* or small houses dependent on larger English monasteries. In these from the small number of the inmates discipline would be little observed, and the bishop needing to correct them would be obliged to apply to the parent house, often meeting with great obstruction and difficulty.

Something has been already said in the first chapter of this work as to the foundations of the earlier monasteries, such as Croyland, Bardney, and Peterborough. We propose now to look at these institutions in the Middle Age such as they were after the establishment of the Cistercians and the advent of the friars. In the county of Lincoln the establishment of the various Orders ran as follows, viz. Houses of Austin Canons, ten; of the Gilbertine Order of Sempringham, eight; of Cistercians, six; of Benedictines, nine; of Templars, six; of Premonstratensian Canons, six; of Carthusians, one; of Friars (in the towns), fifteen; of Nuns of various Orders, twelve. Of these the only ones that could be of use to the diocese generally were the friars, and without doubt in the earlier days of their existence they were a very valuable body. Bishop Grosseteste highly valued them, had some of them constantly with him, and compelled the parish clergy to listen to their sermons, and to allow them a free hand in hearing confessions, etc. This was in fact subversive of all discipline, though in the ignorant condition into which the clergy had fallen it might be excusable. But the deterioration of

¹ Grosseteste, *Epistol.* viii. (ed. Luard).

the friars was very rapid, and they soon became a by-word and a scoff among the people for their lying stories and barefaced mendicancy.

The ten houses of Austin Canons would not prove of any great value to the diocese, for though these canons were for the most part in Holy Orders, and though they held the tithes of many churches, yet ordinarily they did not trouble to serve the churches themselves, but found a substitute as they could, until compelled by the bishops to establish permanent vicarages. There was no Order whose discipline was so bad, and which gave so many grievous scandals as the Austin Canons.

The Gilbertines were mainly a Lincolnshire Order, having been founded by Sir Gilbert of Sempringham, who was in Holy Orders, about the year 1139, on land given by Gilbert de Gaunt, Earl of Lincoln. The peculiarity of the Order was that it consisted of both monks and nuns, sometimes living (as at Sempringham) in buildings closely contiguous to one another. Whether or no scandals resulted from this arrangement, it is certain that the mother house of the Order at Sempringham had a very bad reputation, and was said to be one of the most luxurious and dissolute of the religious houses at the time of the Dissolution.

The Premonstratensian Canons, of which Order there were six houses in the county of Lincoln, owed their singular name to the alleged fact that the place of their first establishment in the diocese of Laon in Picardy was pointed out beforehand (*premonstratum*) by a special interposition of the Blessed Virgin. They adopted the Rule of St. Augustine as reformed

by St. Norbert, Archbishop of Magdeburg, and were usually called White Canons, from the fact of their dress consisting of a white cassock with a rochet over it, a long white cloak and white cap. They thus stood towards the Black Canons of St. Austin much as the Cistercians did towards the Benedictines. Their first settlement in England was at Newhouse in the county of Lincoln (1140). They numbered a considerable amount of houses, but were in fact an alien Order, being under the rule of the Abbot of Premonstre until Pope Julius II. assigned the headship of the Order in England to the Abbot of Welbeck, Notts.

The Cistercians, or reformed Benedictines, came to England in 1128, and were first established at Waverley, near Farnham, the abbot of which house continued to be the head of the Order in England. They were an ascetic development of the Benedictine rule, and labour in the fields was their special characteristic. But they soon became the most popular Order in England, and in consequence wealthy and luxurious; for a long time absorbing almost all the benefactions of the great, and owning the finest abbeys and most beautiful buildings belonging to any Order in England. In the county of Lincoln they had fine houses at Kirksted, Louth Park, and Revesby, but none which could compare in grandeur with their splendid establishments at Rievaulx, Fountains, Tintern, and Vale Royal. As regards help to the bishops and the diocese, the Cistercian Order was a positive drawback and impediment. They enjoyed by papal privileges the most complete exemption from episcopal control,

insomuch that even when an Interdict was on the land they might continue to celebrate in their churches. It has been seen to what difficulty Bishop Longland was put in attempting to correct, through their chief abbot, a thoroughly demoralized and debauched house of this Order at Thame, and it is certain that such exempt powers as this Order possessed must have been a complete bar to any improvement in them through episcopal censures.

Much the same may be said of the Military Orders, the Templars, and the Hospitalers who succeeded to the houses and estates of the disgraced Templars. The Templars were strong in the county of Lincoln, having there six houses, or preceptories. Their sad ending has been already narrated in the episcopate of John Dalderby, and they cannot be regarded as having had much influence on the progress of the diocese.

The *Benedictines* may be looked upon as being a real help to the advance of the Church in the diocese, from their love and cultivation of learning, and the amicable relations which they preserved with the bishops. The chief houses of this Order in the county of Lincoln were Croyland and Bardney, the foundation of which has already been spoken of. Both of these great houses had been destroyed by the Danes, but both had been re-established with greater dignity and wealth than before. In the *scriptorium* of the Benedictine house monks were unceasingly employed in producing those splendid triumphs of writing and illumination which are the wonder and the despair of modern times. Some of the matter thus transmitted is altogether worthless,

but the execution is admirable. The cultivation of the land, the making of drains, and the building of bridges were also carefully attended to, as the history of Croyland and other monasteries tells us; and Croyland also served as a most valuable refuge for numbers of fugitives from war or oppression in those troublous times.

But besides the monasteries, which were more or less valuable for upholding religion in the diocese, there were certain other institutions which were a distinct help to the population, and indirectly to the cause of religion. These were the Hospitals, of which there were at least thirteen in the county of Lincoln.¹ These were not establishments for the treatment of the sick, but rather almshouses for the permanent residence of a certain number of brethren under the rule of a master who was also their chaplain. Then, to complete the survey of the county, there were two *Colleges*, that is establishments of secular canons, lay clerks and choristers, for the purpose of carrying on divine worship, without being bound by any special rule of life. The most remarkable of these in Lincolnshire was at Tattershall, which consisted of a master, six priests, six lay clerks, six choristers, and to which was attached an almshouse for thirteen poor men, built and endowed by Sir Robert Cromwell in the seventeenth year of Henry VI., and valued at the Dissolution at £348. The magnificent church still remains, but the chief part of the endowments passed into the greedy hands of Charles Duke of Suffolk,

¹ There were probably many more, but only thirteen are mentioned by Tanner.

who obtained the spoil of no less than eleven religious houses in this county, amounting in all to the huge sum of £2337, nearly £30,000 of our money. Not much less was the spoil of Edward Lord Clinton, to whom seven monastic estates were assigned, and to whom fell the magnificent possessions of Croyland, valued then at £1217. The Heneage and Tyrwhit families also shared largely in the spoil.

The county of *Leicester* does not appear to have been a favourite spot for monastic settlements. There were indeed seven houses of Austin Canons in the county, but only one of Cistercians (Garrendon, or Garradon), and none of Benedictines. It was, however, well provided with hospitals, and in the town of Leicester there were, as well as three hospitals, four houses of friars. But the most famous monastic building in Leicester was the College of the New Work, or Newark, near to Leicester, which had been much enriched by the Lancastrian kings, and which contained at the Dissolution a dean, twelve secular canons or prebendaries, twelve vicars, three clerks, six choristers, fifty poor men, fifty poor women, and ten nurses. Historically the most famous establishment in Leicester was the house of Austin Canons, dedicated to St. Mary-in-the-Meadows. The connection with this house of Philip Repingdon, Bishop of Lincoln, has already been mentioned. Of this house, Knighton, the Church historian, was abbot, and here it was that in 1530 the great Cardinal Wolsey died as he was returning heartbroken and sick after his arrest in the North.

As to the monastic foundations in *Buckingham-*

shire, there is nothing particular to note. The noble foundation of Eton College was specially exempted from the effects of the Dissolution, and has gone on flourishing and increasing in power since the time of its first planting by King Henry VI. The foundation then consisted of a provost, ten priests, four clerks, six choristers, twenty-five poor grammar scholars and a master to teach them, twenty-five poor old men ; and the value of the property was estimated at the Dissolution at £886. There were several alien priories in Buckinghamshire, and the curious history of one of them may serve to show how many vicissitudes may occur in the life of a monastery. Tykeford, near Newport Pagnell, was a small cell in connection with the great Cluniac monastery of Marmoustier at Tours. To this house Fulk Pamel had given his manors in Buckinghamshire, and the Tours house then established a cell at Tykeford. During Edward III.'s wars with France, this house, like many others connected with French mother houses, was seized by the king. For some reason or other, however, in the first year of King Henry IV. it was restored either to the dispossessed monks or to the mother house. The next phase in its history was its being granted to Cardinal Wolsey by Pope Clement VII. to be used for one of his colleges. This does not appear to have been carried out, as it was again granted in the time of Henry VIII. to certain trustees for the use of King's College in Oxford. Under James I. it was resumed by the Crown, it is uncertain on what grounds, and at last sold by that monarch to Dr. Henry Atkins.

In *Hertfordshire* the interest of the monastic establishments principally centres in St. Alban's, that great and luxurious abbey which had been able in earlier days to wrest its independence from the Bishops of Lincoln,¹ and the abbot of which assumed episcopal rank and wore all the episcopal insignia. St. Alban's was a little *imperium in imperio* in the diocese of Lincoln. It had a number of affiliated churches, all of which made their *processions* annually to the abbey at Whitsuntide, bringing their offerings. It had numerous cells or outlying settlements of monks in various parts of the country. It had a dependent nunnery at Pray, and, it must be added, exhibited a type of immorality and profligacy which was rare if not unique among the great abbeys of England. When Pope Innocent VIII. sent his mandate to Archbishop Morton (1489) to visit the religious houses in England, the archbishop proceeded to inquire into the state of St. Alban's. Having done so, he addressed a letter to the abbot censuring him for simony, usury, dilapidation, and waste, and certain enormous crimes. He points out to him that the monks were leading a lascivious life, polluting the very house of God by committing incest with nuns, and sometimes in their quarrels by the shedding of blood. The Abbess of Pray was a notoriously adulterous woman, and the monks resorted to the nunnery to commit acts of lewdness. At the Nunnery of Sopwell the same evil things went on. Grievous waste and extravagance were practised, sacred vessels were sold. The most open debauchery

¹ See *Life of Robert de Chemry*.

was rife.¹ It may be hoped that the archbishop's censure produced some amendment, but it is certain that long after this the Abbey of St. Alban's was so grievously in debt that no one could be found to accept it as a gift.

In *Huntingdonshire* there were but few religious foundations, but the great Benedictine house of Ramsey was conspicuous. The revenues of this at the Dissolution amounted to nearly £2000, and were granted, as those of others in this county, to Richard Cromwell. St. Neot's, a Benedictine house, had somewhat of a strange history. It was founded as an English house before the Conquest. After the Conquest it was seized by the Norman nobles and given to Bec in Normandy. During the French wars of Edward III. it was confiscated to the Crown, but refounded by Henry IV. as a Prioratus Indigena, only to go at the Dissolution with its revenues of £241 to Richard Cromwell.

Northamptonshire was honourably distinguished in the matter of its religious foundations. It could show no less than eleven hospitals and seven colleges. These latter, with secular canons or prebendaries, lay clerks, and choristers, were not only so many little cathedrals providing for their neighbours the highest type of worship, but they were also to some extent schools. Thus at Higham Ferrers, founded by Archbishop Chichele, there was a grammar-master and a music-master, whose services may have been available not only for the six choristers, but for other youths also. The town of Northampton must have been in

¹ Wilkin's *Concilia*, vol. iii., pp. 632-3.

the Middle Age a veritable ecclesiastical city. It contained not only two Cluniac foundations, which were confiscated and again restored, but also a house of Austin Canons, a college, three hospitals, and houses of the Black, Grey, White, and Austin Friars.

The great Abbey of Peterborough, which had been so cruelly destroyed by the Danes (870), remained in ruins for a hundred years, and then was restored by Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, to greater magnificence than before. On its severance from the diocese of Lincoln, it furnished the foundation for a bishop, dean, six canons, a divinity reader, eight minor canons, eight lay clerks, eight choristers, a master of choristers, two schoolmasters, twenty scholars, six almsmen. At Pipewell there was a Cistercian abbey, the history of which is curious. The abbey was abandoned *sub prætectu paupertatis* about two hundred years after foundation. But the *paupertas* had been caused by the indiscriminate waste of the fine oak woods around the house made by the connivance of the monks, who gained large sums by the sale of the timber. The *Chronicle* which records the history of the abbey has some very amusing details as to the quarrels of the monks with their neighbour, the Lord of Bontevelyn.¹ It may be doubtful whether the Cistercian Order was ever popular in the diocese; the witty invectives of the famous Archdeacon of Oxford, Walter Mapes, would no doubt not be easily forgotten.

¹ Dugdale, *Monast.*, vol. v., p. 435.

" Miris effers laudibus gentem tunicatam,
 Gentem cunctis gentibus merito ingratham,
 Sub ovilis vestibis lupos imitatum,
 Gentem plenam fraudibus et rapinis datam.
 Continentes minimè possunt appellari,
 Sed rapaces maximè et nimis avari.
 Nil nisi presentia sitiunt aut quærunt,
 Farsiunt marsupia, metunt quæ non serunt,
 Pauperum penuriâ sese ditaverunt,
 'Satanæ mancipia sunt et semper erunt.' ¹

The most notable religious house in *Bedfordshire*, at least the one that has most of a history, was the house of Austin Canons at Dunstable. The *Chronicle* of this house, which has been published, gives the record of a continual series of squabbles, with the townsmen on one side, and the diocesan bishop on the other; lawsuits abound. There are continual strivings to get the advowsons of churches; farming done for foreign incumbents, and other unedifying practices.

The principal interest of the religious foundations of *Oxfordshire* centres in the Austin Priory of Oseney and the house of St. Frideswide, which had a checkered history. These two became in turn the foundation of the see of Oxford, taken, like Peterborough, from the diocese of Lincoln. The Abbey of Oseney was constituted a cathedral church in the year 1542, with a dean and six prebendaries, who were to be the Chapter of the new Bishop of Oxford; but in about four years' time this arrangement was changed, and the Abbey of St. Frideswide having come into the king's hands by the confiscation of Cardinal Wolsey's property (to whom it had been granted by a Bull of

¹ Mapes, *Poems*, Camden Society, p. 55.

Pope Clement VII.), was made the cathedral church of Oxford. St. Frideswide's was originally a nunnery built in honour of the lady of that name, daughter of King Didanus, but had been destroyed by the Danes, and when refounded, was occupied, sometimes by secular canons, sometimes by monks, until the period of its transference to Wolsey for the purpose of founding his great college. Wolsey's project was a vast one. The college was to contain 100 canons and a large number of professors of all the liberal arts.

The king's design was not so large, but seems to have been at first larger than it afterwards became. The abbey was augmented by the taking of Canterbury College and Peekwater Inn, and the college, as first founded by the king, was to contain twelve canons. When, however, the see was removed from Oseney, 1546, the college came again into the king's hands. The Priory Church was made the cathedral, a dean and eight canons were to form the Chapter, and 101 students the collegiate part. Other notable religious houses in Oxfordshire were the house of Benedictine Nuns at Godstow, the history of which was connected with fair Rosamond Clifford, and which received high commendation for its good discipline at the time of the Dissolution; and the Cistercian House of Thame, removed by Bishop Alexander from the fens of Otmoor, and remarkable in the time of Bishop Longland for its licentiousness and misrule. Of the small county of *Rutland*, which contained only five religious foundations, two of which were alien, there is nothing special to remark.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries, which was

equivalent to a complete social revolution in England, must have disorganized and convulsed the diocese of Lincoln as much as any part of the land. The Lincolnshire rising, of which mention has been made above, may not have been, and probably was not, specially due to this cause, but no doubt this was one of the causes which added intensity to it. The execution of the Abbot of Barlings, who was in episcopal orders, and had acted as suffragan to Bishop Longland, formed a tragical connection between the insurrection and the suffering religious houses; and the dispossessed monks and nuns wandering hither and thither, without employment or purpose in life, must have long kept alive in men's minds the bitter feelings. The vast crowd of dependents on the monasteries suddenly thrown out of employment must have greatly added to the distress and poverty which were so terribly prevalent at this period.

CHAPTER X

DIVISION OF THE DIOCESE—THE REFORMATION
PERIOD

DURING the episcopate of Bishop Longland, a considerable relief was given to the Bishop of Lincoln by the formation of new sees taking portions of his huge diocese from his jurisdiction. This was part of a scheme entertained by King Henry VIII. after the destruction of the monasteries, for founding a large number of new sees. Of the projected sees—some twenty in number—only six were ever founded, but two of these took portions of the old diocese of Lincoln. The bill to give the king power to found new sees was brought into Parliament by Cromwell. The preamble set forth that the idleness and immorality of the “religious” were not unknown, that therefore their houses might be turned to a more serviceable account, that the Scriptures might be better set forth, children bred to learning, and scholars maintained in the universities; old servants disabled furnished with a support; almshouses better provided; Greek, Hebrew, and Latin lectures encouraged with good salaries; exhibitions given, etc. For these reasons

the king thought it necessary that more bishoprics, collegiate and cathedral churches should be erected in the room of the monasteries dissolved. The enacting part of the statute gives the king the power of erecting what new sees he considered necessary, of settling their endowments and the extent of their districts. Under the scheme, as it became subsequently modified, the diocese of Peterborough was founded, taking the counties of Northampton and Rutland (1541); and that of Oxford (originally called Oseney), taking the county of Oxfordshire (1542).

The diocese of Lincoln, even after this relief, still comprised the counties of Lincoln, Leicester, Huntingdon, Bedford, Buckingham, and part of Hertford, and was destined to continue in this unwieldy size for some three hundred years. The episcopal residence most convenient for this awkwardly-shaped diocese was Buckden, or Bugden, in Huntingdonshire, and here we find that the bishops principally resided, some of them scarce ever visiting their cathedral city, where the palace remained in ruins until quite modern days.

An evil precedent for the spoliation of sees for the benefit of the Crown was set by the passing of a statute towards the end of the reign of Henry VIII. (37 Hen. VIII., cap. 16), which gave the king no less than seventy manors belonging to the see of York, twelve belonging to Canterbury, and several belonging to London. When, after the death of Longland, Henry Rands of Holbeach, Bishop of Rochester, was translated to Lincoln, this bad precedent was followed to the great impoverishment of the see. Thirty-four

rich manors belonging to the see of Lincoln were alienated in his time; though (according to Strype) "not by his fault."¹ Longland, indeed, had not been faultless in this matter. During his incumbency, and probably with his consent, the "precious jewels" of the Bishop of Lincoln's mitre had found their way into the Crown Jewel House, "with superstitious shrines and all superfluous plate, copes, etc." The commission issued in 1540 had found in the minster, "of gold, 2621 ozs.; of silver, 4285 ozs.; besides a great number of pearls and precious stones of great value. Two shrines, one of gold, called St. Hugh's, stands on the back side of the high altar; the other, St. John Dalderby's, of pure silver, in the great cross isle." All this had been carried away as spoil for the king's use.

Now, in addition to this spoliation of 1541, another raid was made upon the ornaments of the church, under some one of the three commissions issued in the time of Edward VI. for the despoiling of churches. The amount of depredation will best be judged by a comparative list, showing the amount of ornaments left at the end of the reign of Henry VIII. and those remaining at the end of that of Edward VI.

<i>King Henry VIII.</i>					<i>King Edward VI.</i>	
Chalices	...	...	6	...	...	3
Pyxes	...	...	7	...	...	1
Cruets for Holy Oil	...	...	4	...	...	2
Spoons	...	...	3	...	...	1
Copes of various colours	...	...	256	...	...	173

¹ Strype, *Memorials Ecclesiastical*, vol. iv., p. 168.

Chasubles of various colours ...	54	...	...	47
Altar Frontals (vari- ous colours) ...	8	...	...	6
Linen Altar Cloths ...	7	...	...	19 ¹

It is perhaps to be wondered at that in those boisterous and desecrating days so many of the ornaments were still left to the church, especially as the bishop who succeeded Longland was one of the "reforming temper," and the dean, Dr. Taylor, was of similar opinions. At this moment, indeed, there was considerable danger lest the very semblance of the ancient Church life should be taken from the English Church. Bishop Holbeach, having been translated from Rochester during the summer, may not have come under the law enacted in December (1547), for doing away with the ancient custom of election of bishops by their Chapters, and ordaining their appointment by letters patent from the Crown. But he must have administered his diocese under the provisions of the Act² which declares that "all authority of jurisdictions, spiritual and temporal, is derived from his Majesty as supreme head of these churches, and that all courts ecclesiastical within the two realms are kept by no other power and authority, either foreign or within the realms, but by the authority of his excellent majesty." Upon this ground "it is enacted that all summonses, citations and other processes of archbishops and bishops, which used to be

I am indebted for this list to Canon Chr. Wordsworth, in the *Lincoln Diocesan Magazine*, June 1889.

² 1 Edw. VI. cap. 2.

sent on in their own names, shall be made in the name and with the style of the king, as it is in writs original or judicial at the common law; and that the test thereof be in the name of the archbishop or bishop. And that every bishop, or person exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction, shall have the king's name engraven on the seals of their office. The penalty for contravening the statute is imprisonment at the king's will and pleasure." He must also have been appointed *durante bene-placito* of the Crown. Even Bishop Burnet acknowledges that "the extreme of raising the ecclesiastical power too high in the time of popery had now produced another of depressing it too much."

The spoliation of churches, the seizure of ecclesiastical revenues by the laity, which often left parishes without any provision for a minister, the tumults, blasphemies and insurrections which marked this troublous time, are sufficiently painful to read of,¹ yet concurrently with these, there was a wholesome process of reform going on, in which both the Bishop and the Dean of Lincoln took a prominent part. In the Convocation of Canterbury, which met in November 1547, of which the Dean of Lincoln was prolocutor, the clergy of the Lower House voted a resolution that the Holy Communion ought to be received in both kinds. This was ratified by Act of Parliament, and soon afterwards a committee of divines, of which Bishop Holbeach was one, drew up an office, the

¹ The most scathing account of them will be found in Bernard Gilpin's Sermon, printed in Strype's *Memorials of Reformation*, vol. iv., and in Bishop Latimer's Sermons.

peculiarity of which was that it preserved the ancient service of the mass in Latin until the priest had communicated, and then provided an English service for the communion of the people. Collier is of opinion that this service was submitted to and approved by Convocation before being published;¹ but there is no mention of this in the proclamation which authorized it, which declares that it was set out by the king "on the advice of his dear uncle and others of his Privy Council." Heylin is of opinion that the same committee of divines which drew up this office were also the divines who perfected the Book of Common Prayer at Windsor in November 1547. It is certain that the Bishop and Dean of Lincoln were conspicuous members of this body, and to them we owe at least some of the gratitude with which English Churchmen have ever regarded the first Prayer Book of Edward VI.

There is no reason to suppose that the clergy in the diocese of Lincoln were, at this time, in any way superior to those in other dioceses of the English Church. Of the whole body of the clergy Strype gives a most disparaging account. "The clergy were now generally very bad, from the bishops to the curates." The very name of *bishop*, he says, had grown so "odious among the people, that the word *superintendent* began to be affected." "The curates were both ignorant and scandalous for their lives. The people in many places did withhold their tithes from them, and the reason they gave was because

¹ Collier, vol. v., p. 217. *Memorials Ecclesiastical*, vol. iv., pp. 141-3.

their curates, some were ignorant and some were idle, and many of them so intolerably bad, lazy and wicked that the parishioners oftentimes complained, and brought informations against them to the bishops of the dioceses, nay to the Council."¹ That the great change which was now passing over the English Church should find many of the clergy unwilling and unable to accept it and to carry it out was to be expected, and the fact that the universal greed of patrons of livings to seize as much as possible of the revenues, led them to put into benefices any clergy of whatever character or ability who were ready to give up the principal part of their emoluments to their patrons, greatly aggravated the evil. The Crown also intensified the mischief by the plan of relieving itself from paying the pensions of dispossessed monks and friars and chantry priests, by putting them into benefices. These men must have thoroughly hated the reforming movement, and have done all they could to mar and check it. We know that on the publication of the communion service of the first Prayer Book, they deliberately set themselves to make it as like the popish mass as possible. Hence in the Injunctions set forth after the second royal visitation it was ordered "that no minister do counterfeit the popish mass, as to kiss the Lord's Table, washing his fingers at every time of the communion, blessing his eyes with the paten or sudary, or crossing his head with the paten, shifting of the book from one place to another, laying down and licking the chalice of the communion, holding up his fingers, hand or thumbs

¹ *Memorials Ecclesiastical*, vol. iv., pp. 141-3.

joined towards his temples, breathing upon the bread or chalice, showing the sacrament openly before the distribution of the communion, ringing of sacring bells, or setting any light upon the Lord's Table at any time."

In spite of the "king's preachers" who were peregrinating everywhere to instruct the people, a bishop of "reforming views" must have had no small task to perform at that period. It is not probable that Bishop Holbeach or Bishop Taylor, who succeeded him (1552), but only retained his office for a very short period, exercised much influence on the state of the diocese, which was seething with discontent at the abolition of the old services, the destruction of the monasteries, the spoliation of the churches, and the shameless grasping of ecclesiastical revenues by the great men, who appeared to have no conscience or religious feeling. The fall of the great central spire of the cathedral, which occurred in a storm during the episcopate of Bishop Holbeach, may have seemed to many, ominous of the impending utter destruction of the ancient Church of England; and had the reign of Edward VI. continued much longer, irretrievable mischief might have been suffered.

Happily for the Church the young king, who was far better than his surroundings, and anxious to do what he could to make a useful application of the spoils of the old superstitions, was removed, and a ruler succeeded whose savage temper and bitter vengeance gave a glory and charm to the reforming work, and by the baptism of blood endowed it with a strength which it could not otherwise have had.

Bishop Holbeach did not live to see the great change in the condition of the Church brought about by the accession of Queen Mary. He died early in the year 1551, and was succeeded in June 1552 by Dr. Taylor, who had taken a prominent part in the formation of the Anglican Prayer Book, and had acted as prolocutor of the Canterbury Convocation. Dr. Taylor was appointed under the new system by letters patent without the *congé, d'élire*, and *durante bene-placito*. He had not always been of the same mind in doctrine that he now probably was. He had held strongly the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation in the Eucharist, and it was his sermon in which he advocated this view, which excited John Nicolson (or Lambert) to go to him and offer ten reasons to prove that his teaching was erroneous. Taylor, not over well pleased at being thus brought to book, had consulted with Dr. Barnes, also a Lutheran, and both of them had taken Nicolson's writing to Cranmer, then also in the Lutheran stage of his opinions. Nicolson was brought before the archbishop, who endeavoured to make him retract, but the unfortunate man was rash enough to appeal to the king. The end of it was a solemn trial, an unjust sentence, and the burning of the poor sacramentary. It is probable that some further diminution of the revenues of the see took place at the accession of Dr. Taylor. From being one of the richest, Lincoln became one of the poorest of the bishoprics. Its rating fell from £2000 to £800. Dr. Taylor's episcopate was a short one, and the principal thing notable about it was the circumstances of his quitting it.

Between the accession of Mary and the holding of her first parliament (October 5, 1553) there had been sufficient indication of the queen's determination to uphold the Romish religion at any cost. Some bishops were already committed to the tower. Others had fled beyond seas, but Bishop Taylor, though he must have been somewhat of a marked man, declined to fly. More than this, when the parliament opened, Bishop Taylor, and Bishop Harley of Hereford, presented themselves with the avowed intention of justifying their doctrine. The parliament commenced with a Mass of the Holy Ghost. At this the reforming bishops refused to assist, and either withdrew, or, according to one authority, were "violently thrust out."¹ The Bishop of Lincoln was afterwards summoned before the Council, which appears, as in the last reign, to be the tribunal for trying ecclesiastical offences. But his death, which took place soon after, prevented any measures being taken against him, and the diocese of Lincoln once again passed under the direction of a Romish ecclesiastic—John White, warden of Winchester, being consecrated in 1554. The *congé d'élire* under which White was elected was issued March 18, 1554, and at the same time were issued similar documents for the election of bishops to St. David's, Hereford, Chester, Gloucester and Bristol, the former bishops of which had been deprived or had fled. It is to be presumed that Bishop White was regarded as an accomplished theologian, as he was sent to Oxford to dispute against Ridley and Latimer. He earnestly exhorted the former, who had been a friend in old

¹ Collier, *Church History*, vol. vi., p. 20.

days, to recant, but Ridley was too firmly fixed in his opinions to listen to him.

It does not appear that any of those who held reforming opinions in the diocese of Lincoln were brought to trial under Bishop White, but this was perhaps because he had not paid any close attention to his diocese. It certainly was not from tenderness or shrinking from enforcing the extreme penalty of the law, for after his translation to Winchester, in 1557, three persons were burned at his instigation, and in the diocese of Chichester, which he was administering, no less than ten suffered at Lewes.¹ Lincoln diocese may therefore be considered as well quit of Bishop White, and though Watson, Dean of Durham, who succeeded him, was of the same sort of temper, yet he had but little time to make investigations; before the happy event of the death of Queen Mary delivered the Church and the land from the sombre shadow which brooded over it. Lincoln diocese therefore escaped scot free from those troublesome times of blood. But the effect of the horrible scenes which were enacted in so many parts of the country must have been the same here, as it clearly was in other places. Nothing could have been devised more calculated to strengthen the reforming movement, and to commend it to the affections of the people, than this savage and senseless fury which condemned not only bishops and priests, but artisans and even women and children to be burned in horrible torments for adhering to that form of faith which had been fully sanctioned by law in the previous reign.

¹ Burnet, *Hist. Ref.*, vol. i., p. 543 (ed. 1841).

It is abundantly clear of what spirit Bishop Watson was from his proceedings with the other commissioners in the visitation of the University of Cambridge. Not only did he take part in the senseless and indecent farce of exhuming and burning the bodies of Bucer and Fagius, but (if Burnet's account is to be believed), preaching at Cambridge on the Feast of the Purification, he defended the carrying of candles in procession, on the ground that the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph had carried wax candles in procession, and the Church had learned from them to observe this ceremony. This was heard, as Burnet adds, "not without the laughter of many."¹ From such a divine the diocese had the good fortune to be soon delivered. The prudent and temporizing policy in religious matters shown at the commencement of the reign of Elizabeth may have perhaps led Bishop Watson to suppose that his position would not be interfered with. But, if so, nothing could have been more unwise on his part than the contumacious and obstructive line taken by him and Bishop White in the formal disputation in Westminster Abbey, in 1559. Not only did these bishops refuse to yield to the ruling of the chairman, but they openly rejected the arrangement made by Archbishop Heath, one of themselves, and showed a spirit of extreme violence. They declared, "that it was too great an encouragement to heretics to hear them thus discourse against the faith before the unlearned multitude; and that the queen by so doing had incurred the sentence of excommunication; and

¹ Burnet, *Hist. Ref.*, vol. i., p. 541.

they talked of excommunicating both her and her Council." ¹

It was not very safe policy to threaten Queen Elizabeth. The two bishops were at once conveyed to the Tower. They were both, according to Burnet, "morose and sullen men," and as they both refused the oath of supremacy, were in due time deprived. Watson, probably on account of his excessive "sullenness," was detained in prison for many years. Some very curious history is connected with his after life, which does not belong to our subject here. To Watson, however, must be allowed the credit of having obtained back from Queen Mary several of the manors of which the see had been despoiled under his predecessors.

The fact that the whole of the sees of England became vacant, with the exception of Llandaff, either by death or deprivation, at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, and that all ecclesiastical authority was in abeyance, must have been productive of the greatest confusion. Proclamations were indeed issued to bid the people make no innovations, but to wait for the legal settlement, but they were probably but of small avail. It was soon indeed perceived in what direction things were tending.

The Act of Uniformity restored the Prayer Book of Edward VI., with some few alterations, and then commissioners were sent throughout the country to establish the new order of things, and preachers were sent with them to instruct the people. Jewel, one of these, testifies that he found the people "sufficiently

¹ Burnet, *Hist. Ref.*, vol. i., p. 572.

well disposed towards religion," though great traces of superstition existed everywhere.¹ It is asserted by Camden that only 189 clergy in the whole country absolutely refused to conform, but there were many who, nominally accepting the new order, determined nevertheless to do their best to thwart it. It is said that of the clergy "scarce one in a hundred was able and willing to preach the Word of God."² Under these circumstances the appointment of an able and learned man to be bishop must have been gladly welcomed in the diocese of Lincoln.

The diocese might feel somewhat of pride in having given to the Church the excellent Primate, Matthew Parker, who had been Dean of Lincoln in King Edward's time. Parker was consecrated December 17, 1559, and in January 1560 he consecrated Nicholas Bullingham to the see of Lincoln. Bullingham, a Worcester man, was a good divine and lawyer, and had been chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer. He was made Archdeacon of Lincoln by Bishop Holbeach, but in Mary's time had been deprived of his preferments and obliged to escape to Emden. Returning on the accession of Elizabeth, he was at once selected by Archbishop Parker for the important trust of the diocese of Lincoln, and consecrated at Lambeth, January 21, 1560. No doubt under the Act of Parliament lately passed, the see of Lincoln, already impoverished at the appointments of Holbeach and Taylor, was still

¹ *Zurich Letters*, vol. i., p. 44.

² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

further denuded of its manors,¹ having again to surrender those whose restitution had been obtained by Bishop Watson. As a little help to his income, Bullingham was allowed to retain his appointment as Archdeacon of Lincoln, which brought him in a certain amount of fees.

Before the consecration of any bishops, commissioners were actively employed selecting manors for the Crown. The bishops elect addressed a strong remonstrance to the queen (October 18), protesting against this spoliation of the sees, and offering (not very wisely perhaps) an annual payment of 1000 marks if their manors were left to them. The tenths and first-fruits, abandoned by Mary, had now been again restored to the Crown, and the bishops elect protested that if, in addition to the manors they had to give up, and the heavy fees extorted from them, they also need to pay to the Crown the whole of their first year's income, they "dared not enter into their functions." There seems indeed at this time to have been a deliberate intention on the part of the queen and her courtiers to reduce the Church to absolute penury. Possibly the remonstrance may have had some little effect, but the work of spoliation and keeping of sees vacant in order to grasp their little revenues went on during this reign.

Bullingham was an active member of the Convocation of 1562, which settled the Thirty-nine Articles, and he is said also to have had a hand in the *Book of Advertisements* published in 1566. In 1567 he issued a

¹ Collier (*Church History*, vol. vi., p. 261) says that only one manor was left to the see of Lincoln.

circular letter to the incumbents of his diocese to make a collection for the Protestant refugees from France and Flanders. In 1571, when Sandys was promoted to London, Bullingham was no doubt glad to quit his huge and impoverished diocese for the more manageable and probably better endowed one of his native county, Worcester. How far he may have laid himself out to cope with the great difficulties and disorders prevalent in his time it is hard to say, the Lincoln Episcopal Registers, from Bishop Longland to Bishop Sanderson—a period of upwards of one hundred years—being missing. He enjoyed the close friendship of Archbishop Parker till the death of the Primate. We are not greatly surprised to learn that Bishop Bullingham died largely in debt, considering the shameful way in which the revenues of the sees had been appropriated by the Crown.

CHAPTER XI

THE PURITANS

IT is hard, perhaps, now, rightly to estimate the immense difficulties with which the bishops of Queen Elizabeth's time had to contend in administering their dioceses. On the one side there was the queen, unscrupulous, a greedy spoiler of Church revenues, viewing religion as a State institution, in which she would have exact conformity to her regulations, and rating the bishops for not enforcing such conformity. On the other, the Puritanical clergy, fighting constantly against the requirements of the Act of Uniformity, and using every subterfuge, with the aid of the foreign Protestant divines, to set at naught the bishops and the law. In this contentiousness they were encouraged by the greedy courtiers, who hoped to humble the Church more completely, that they might strip it even barer than they had yet done. There was no point, perhaps, in which the episcopal office was more completely set at naught than in the matter of ordinations. The plan adopted by the Nonconformists, who wished to obtain the legal ordination that they might hold benefices, is described

by Neal as follows—"They apprehended the election of the people and the examinations of the Presbyters, with the imposition of their hands, necessary to the call of a minister; but this, if it were done in England without a bishop, would hardly entitle them to preach in the Church, or to have a legal title to the profits of their livings. Therefore after they had passed the former trials, they applied to the bishop for the imposition of his hands. But others, not satisfied with the ordination of a single person, not rightly called (as they thought) to the office of a bishop, went beyond sea, and were ordained by the Presbyteries of foreign churches. For though the English Puritans had their Synods and Presbyteries, yet 'tis remarkable they never ordained a single person to the ministry."¹

What was to be done with these men, many of them full of zeal and devotion, who remained within the Church with the resolved purpose of not conforming to its requirements, but acting as Presbyterian ministers? One of the plans adopted by the bishops was to call upon all the clergy from time to time to take out new licences, when they would have to subscribe afresh to the Book of Common Prayer, and (after the law of 1571) to the Thirty-nine Articles. This no doubt was the cause of displacing many. But it was not the men who went out, and, at imminent risk from the civil power, formed sectarian assemblies; but the men who stayed in the Church as Nonconformists and haters of the Church system, who were the great trouble to the bishops.

Neal has preserved a curious examination of an

¹ Neal, *Puritans*, vol. i., p. 205.

incumbent of the diocese of Lincoln, who in 1570 was three times before Bishop Bullingham¹ to be examined on his non-conformity. This was Mr. Axton, parson of Morton Corbet in Leicestershire. "Being asked how he was ordained, he answered, 'I had indeed the laying on of the hands of one of the bishops of England, but that was the least part of my calling.'—*Bishop*. 'What calling had you more?'—*Axton*. 'I having exercised and expounded the Word several times to an ordinary assembly of ten ministers, they joined in prayer, and being required to speak their consciences in the presence of God, declared upon the trial they had of me I might become a profitable labourer in the House of God, after which I received the laying on of the hands of the bishop.'—*Bishop*. 'How were you chosen Pastor of Morton Corbet?'—*Axton*. 'By the free election of the people and leave of the patron. After I had preached about six weeks by way of approbation, I was chosen by one consent of them all, a sermon being preached by one of the brethren, setting forth the mutual duties of pastor and people.'” This represents a complete inversion of the disciplinary system of the Church of England, and a deliberate attempt to carry on the ministry on the Presbyterian platform. Of course men of this class would not conform to any part of the ceremonial. The bishop's requirements were of the mildest order. "*Bishop*. 'I will not trouble you with the cross in baptism, and if you will wear the surplice but sometimes it shall suffice.'—*Axton*. 'I can't consent to wear the surplice, 'tis against my

¹ Or Cooper ; Neal is not precise about the date.

conscience. I trust by the help of God I shall never put on that sleeve which is a mark of the beast.' —*Bishop*. 'Will you leave your flock for the surplice?' —*Axton*. 'Nay, will you persecute me from my flock for a surplice?' "

Such men were completely impracticable, and we can scarce wonder at the queen's severe proceedings against them. But with these Puritanical ministers in possession of many churches, and the strong phalanx of Roman Catholics eagerly scheming for the restoration of the happy era of the burnings, the bishops must indeed have had a hard time.

In 1570, Nicholas Bullingham was succeeded as bishop of the see of Lincoln by Thomas Cooper, late Fellow of Magdalen, Oxford, a learned man, who during Mary's reign had practised medicine with a view of obtaining security from persecution, but on the accession of Elizabeth had proceeded in Divinity. He became Dean of Christ Church, and was several times elected Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. On the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Oxford, his *Gratulatio* so pleased the queen that, according to Wood, "she endeavoured to promote the author as high in the Church as she could." Accordingly in 1569 he was made Dean of Gloucester, and in February 1671, Bishop of Lincoln. Cooper took a strong line against the Puritans, and was much hated by them, as their violent attacks on him intimate. But he also thoughtfully cared for his more conformable clergy and their parishioners, as was shown by his publication in 1573 of an "exposition" of the Old Testament lessons read on Sundays, which was

thought so valuable a work by Archbishop Parker, that he endeavoured to get a copy of it placed in every parish church. He also published several sermons preached in the cathedral, and in especial a *Brief Homily* to be read in all parish churches before the administration of the Lord's Supper when the minister had no preacher's licence. This Homily, which is described as "plain, spiritual, and earnest" (Overton), must have been of great value under the circumstances, as were also the careful inquiries made by the bishop as to whether the "preaching ministers" had duly delivered their sermons, and the unpreaching ministers "procured" monthly sermons to be preached in their churches.

Bishop Cooper took a moderate line in divinity, and only contended for the lawfulness of the Church establishment, without advocating the divine claims of the Church. Yet he was especially hateful to the Puritans, who assailed him with infamous libels in the Mar-Prelate controversy. The *Admonition to Parliament*,¹ in which the Puritans boldly claimed to have the whole status and constitution of the Church of England altered to suit their scruples, came out shortly after Cooper's accession to the episcopate, and so strong was the feeling in their favour in the country, that those who loved the Church perceived clearly the greatness of the danger. It was before all things necessary, that the Admonitions should receive at once an immediate and complete answer. The hand to do this was furnished by the diocese of Lincoln, which

¹ There were two published, either together, or at short intervals in 1572. Cartwright had a hand in the second.

may well be proud of having been the native place as well as one of the ecclesiastical homes of John Whitgift.

Whitgift was born at Great Grimsby in 1530, and after a most successful career at Cambridge, having reached the position of Master of Trinity and Vice-Chancellor, was made Dean of Lincoln in 1571. He had had the good fortune to please the queen by a sermon preached before her in 1567, and she remained faithful to her liking for him through all his career, constantly advancing him from one post to another. He was a man who eminently had the courage of his opinions, and scrupled not to reprove the queen for her spoliation of the Church, and to contend zealously against the knot of unprincipled courtiers who were around her. To Whitgift we owe it that the Church was not absolutely impoverished in that unprincipled era, as also we owe him a debt of gratitude for the good work which he did in repressing the Puritan faction. His answer to the *Admonition* involved him in a controversy with Thomas Cartwright, with whom he had had many passages of arms previously at Cambridge. The Answer had been, before printing, submitted to his diocesan, Bishop Cooper, as well as to Archbishop Parker. But the queen was not satisfied with argumentative warfare. She would have strong measures of repression, and because the bishops were not forward to use these, she openly insulted them in a proclamation, charging them with holding their courts only to get money. She then appointed certain commissioners to enforce stringently the provisions of the Act of Uniformity.

The struggle continued throughout the whole of

this reign, and no doubt some severe measures were taken by Whitgift and the bishops who went with him, but it is probable that less would not have sufficed to save the Church of England from utter disruption and ruin. For this was not merely a case of individual non-conformity. Those who held Puritan views acted in concert, and with a deliberate attempt to establish a new form of ecclesiastical discipline, which they pressed again and again upon a Parliament only too ready to favour their view. Had not the queen stood firm, and had she not found a man of Whitgift's strength of mind to carry out her view, the Church of England would have been Presbyterianized or broken up into a number of independent congregations. The war was carried on by a series of the foulest libels against the bishops, and the discontented party were supported by men in power, among whom the Earl of Leicester was conspicuous. Some of these men even resorted to the atrocious expedient of appointing disreputable persons to the livings in their patronage, with the view of bringing scandal and disgrace upon the Church.

How far did these melancholy struggles affect specially the diocese of Lincoln? Bishop Cooper, who had vigorously opposed the Puritans, and had approved and probably assisted in Whitgift's *Admonition*, had been translated to Winchester, and was succeeded by Dr. Wickham, who had passed through a long series of preferments, which culminated in the bishopric of Lincoln (1584). Of this bishop we have some visitation articles preserved, which indicate some good practical work going on in the diocese,

It would seem that the custom of saying the Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays in all parish churches was held a matter to be inquired into, as also the perambulations of the parish on Rogation days, when the 103rd and 104th Psalms, the Litany, and a Homily were to be used.

Bishop Wickham comes into general history as the preacher of the funeral sermon on Mary, Queen of Scots, on August 1, 1587, in Peterborough Cathedral. He spoke charitably of the unfortunate queen, and hoped they might meet her in heaven, for which, of course, he was violently assailed by the Puritans. In 1595, Wickham was translated to Winchester, and soon after died.

As some index to the amount of non-conformity in Lincolnshire we may take the record of the number of incumbents suspended after Whitgift's primary metropolitical visitation for refusing to subscribe to the three articles. The number was twenty-one. This compares favourably with the numbers given for other counties. In one of the supplications made by the Puritans to Parliament a survey of the state of certain counties is given. Lincolnshire is put down as having 590 benefices, for which there were only 121 incumbents with preaching licences, leaving 455 as "no preachers, but readers." There are also said to be 154 "double beneficed and non-residents," which seems to dispose completely of the accuracy of the return, unless we take the former number to include curates also.

In Buckinghamshire it is expressly said that curates as well as incumbents are reckoned in the numbers

given for that county, which amount to 210. Of these 30 are preachers, 120 no-preachers, and no less than 160 double-beneficed and non-resident. If there is any accuracy in these calculations they exhibit a melancholy state of things. There is, however, good reason to believe that they are not accurate, as the "Survey" makes the total of "preaching ministers" in England amount on the whole to 2000, whereas the archbishop states that there are fully 3000. It was the queen's view that five preachers were sufficient for a county, but her hostility to preaching is well known. It was on this ground that she took so strong a line against the "prophesyings," or the meetings of clergy to discuss in common passages of Scripture or theological topics. These she held to be an encouragement to Puritanism and disorder, and peremptorily ordered the archbishop to put them down. Grindal, thinking it a matter of conscience to refuse to obey, was suspended by a very arbitrary Act of the Star Chamber.

In the diocese of Lincoln the "prophesyings" were readily received. Bishop Cooper issued directions as to the manner in which they were to be conducted, one of which may possibly have been of somewhat a dangerous character. There was to be a chairman or moderator to preside at the discussions and to sum up. The bishop directed that the moderator should comment not only on the arguments used, but also on the lives and general conduct of the speakers. The queen was able, with the assistance of the bishops, to put down prophesyings for a time; but it is very observable that not many years after

(1585) a letter was issued by the Council recommending the encouragement of these meetings, as to which we have testimony of a bishop that "many that could do little good before in the Church, by this means have been brought in a short time to do some profit. Much good hath ensued of this exercise." The bishop who wrote these words was William Chaderton, then Bishop of Chester, but in 1595 translated to Lincoln:

Puritanism was at that time in a state of collapse. The nation was thoroughly out of temper with the Puritans for their disloyalty at the time of the Spanish Armada, and for the foul libels vented in the Mar-Prelate controversy. In 1593 was passed the Act subjecting them to trial before the Common Law judges, and enacting *banishment* as a punishment for non-conformity. These measures were completely successful, and when Bishop Chaderton was translated to the see of Lincoln his work must have been much more easy than that of his predecessors. The Puritans having a good deal lost their power of annoyance, the bishop's attention was more carefully directed towards recusants of the Romish faith, many of whom were brought before him at Buckden and obliged to take the oath of conformity.

It was a time of great scarcity and poverty, and Archbishop Whitgift issued a circular letter to the bishops bidding them admonish the preachers in their dioceses to exhort the wealthier part of their parishioners to contribute liberally for the aid of the poor. It is to be hoped the diocese of Lincoln responded readily to this appeal, but no particulars are producible.

At Burghley House, near Stamford town, and

within his diocese, the bishop was called upon to preach before the new king, James I., on Easter Day, 1603. The Puritans had founded the highest hopes upon the accession of James to power, some previous coquettings with them politically having induced them to think that he favoured their opinions. The Millenary petition (so called), signed by about 750 clerical and lay signatories, had been presented. The king had said something ominous about impropriations, and the archbishop was occupied in getting up evidence to meet the allegations of the petition. Under these circumstances the bishop had somewhat of a risky office to perform in preaching before the king, whose theological tastes made him a severe critic of sermons. That the bishop did not incur any censure may be held to show that his discourse was not displeasing to James, and in fact the bishops soon came to know that they were safe in his hands, and that the Puritans had not any grounds for hoping any special consideration from him.

Bishop Chaderton complained that the see had been so impoverished that he could not afford to live in the episcopal palace at Buckden, but was compelled to hire a small house, at which place he died in 1608. But before this occurred much had happened in connection with the struggle against Puritanism. There had been the Hampton Court conference to consider the points raised in the Millenary petition, and to review the whole status of the Church. Very little had been conceded to the Puritans at that conference, and a sharp proclamation had followed bidding them to conform or expect the consequences.

Bancroft had succeeded to the primacy after the death of Whitgift, and had immediately proceeded to enforce subscription to the three articles, together with a declaration that the subscribers did this willingly (*ex animo*). This was a great stumbling-block to many, and numerous incumbents were ejected from their benefices. Neal says, "above three hundred ministers were silenced or deprived," but this is evidently a wild statement, as Archbishop Bancroft only admits the deprivation of 49. Dr. John Burgess, Rector of Sutton Coldfield, in the diocese of Lincoln, writing to King James, states that the number of Nonconformist ministers in the counties which formed the diocese of Lincoln amounted to 156.¹ The great majority of these, however, subscribed. The doctor himself was deprived for non-subscription, but afterwards having had a personal interview with the king, he conformed, and in the end became a strenuous apologist for conformity.

The Puritans were very anxious to have a public conference on the lawfulness of imposing ceremonies in general, and in particular on the surplice, the cross in Baptism, and kneeling at the Holy Communion, but this was not conceded to them. Upon this the Lincolnshire ministers drew up a paper, which is known as the *Abridgment of the Lincolnshire Ministers*, which was presented to the king, December 1, 1604. In this they declare that they are ready to subscribe the first of the three articles which declares the king's supremacy, but that they could not sign the other two because they were persuaded that "the

¹ Huntingdonshire was not included in this calculation.

Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Articles contain in them sundry things which are not agreeable, but contrary to the Word of God.”¹ Against the ceremonies they argue at great length, and among other things declare that “Dr. Chaderton, Bishop of Lincoln, in his speech before all the ministers convened before him at Huntingdon, said that the Church might well be without the ceremonies, and wished them taken away.”² We have no security that this is a fair statement of the Bishop of Lincoln’s sentiments in this matter, but with such a mass of non-conformity to deal with he may have been ready to be as conciliating in tone as possible.

The *Abridgment*, published early in 1605, was answered by Dr. Morton, afterwards Bishop of Chester, in a treatise called *A Defence of the Three Ceremonies*. The work was not a very conclusive one, and was immediately answered by a tract entitled the *Three Nocent Ceremonies*. To this the Dr. Burgess, who had once been deprived for non-conformity, wrote a reply, in which he shows that the Puritans were quitting their original ground, and going further in their opposition to the Church than the first objectors had done. He counsels moderation, but such counsels were hardly acceptable on either side. Many were ready to sacrifice all rather than submit to Bancroft’s tests, and the archbishop, a thorough disciplinarian, had no notion of allowing any relaxation, but went steadily onwards until he had produced at last an outward conformity. In the judgment of Lord Clarendon his success was very

¹ Neal, *Puritans*, vol. ii., p. 56.

² *Ibid.*, p. 59.

great. He speaks of him as the "metropolitan who understood the Church excellently," and "almost rescued it out of the hands of the Calvinian party."¹ Heylin says, "he produced a great alteration in the face of religion; more churches beautified and repaired in the short time of his government than had been in many years before; the liturgy was solemnly officiated by the priests, and more religiously attended by the common people; the fasts and festivals more punctually observed by both than of later times; copes brought again into the service of the Church; the surplice generally worn without doubt or hesitancy, and all things in a manner reduced to the same state in which they had first been settled under Queen Elizabeth."²

That there was special need for correction and discipline in the diocese of Lincoln, we have the means of showing from the records contained in the bishop's excommunication book of 1606, from which we give some extracts.

John Smith, clerk, of Gainsborough, though suspended, continues to read the service in the church. He was probably acting for Jerom Phillips, Vicar of Gainsborough, who had absented himself from his cure, and made no proper provision for service. This, in the case of a town of considerable size, was a great scandal. Then come entries representing that the Vicars of Lea, Driby, Scotton, Northorpe, Great Coates, and many others, had not provided curates, though non-resident in their benefices. Roger Metcalfe, Rector of Mavis Enlesby, is censured for being

¹ *Hist. Rebellion*, p. 36 (ed. 1843).

² Heylin's *Presbyterians*, p. 376.

a great usurer, undecent in apparel, communion but twice a year, chancel in decay, omission of divine service, doth read no sermons, a profaner of the Sabbath. The entries of censure on churchwardens and clergy for taking off the lead and covering the churches or chancels with thatch or tiles are continual. Clergy are censured for permitting decay in their parsonage houses and buildings. One clergyman is censured for having abandoned his cure and become a "temporal man"; others for employing as curates men not in orders; several for allowing the chancels to fall into decay. There are constant entries showing the decay and dilapidation of the churches. Some are "utterly ruined." In some cases communion plate and "organs" had been sold out of the church. Clergy are censured for not having monthly sermons in their churches "according to the canon." There is a censure against the Vicar of Edlington for christening a child without using the sign of the cross. Another is censured for tethering his horse with the bell-ropes; many for suffering swine to root in the churchyard. Churchwardens for suffering persons to sit in the church with their hats on. In the great church of Grantham it is complained that there is not any Bible, and one of the church windows is "daubed up." Whether excommunications were actually pronounced for these offences may be doubted, but the catalogue of them at any rate indicates a great prevalence of disorder and carelessness in Church matters, which it took a long time to amend.

CHAPTER XII

THE STUART TIMES

It has been a source of wonder and thankfulness to many that the Church of England has escaped so many perils, and successfully encountered so many drawbacks in the course of her career, so as to blossom out into the vigour and power of her present state. Among these drawbacks may fairly be reckoned the character of her bishops during the Stuart times. To say nothing of the rest of England, the diocese of Lincoln was peculiarly unfortunate in the prelates who guided it from the death of Chaderton to the period of the Great Rebellion. They were time-servers, sycophantic, occupied far too much with court life and court intrigues, always angling for preferment, and ready to load the king with any amount of nauseous flattery. Elizabeth had no special affection for bishops. She treated them roughly, and did not want to have them about her. It was different with James I. He was fond of theological talk, and fancied himself learned, and was pleased to have divines about him. This taste they were not slow to take advantage of, and did not scruple to recommend

themselves to his Majesty by the most open and unblushing flattery.

William Barlow, Dean of Chester, who succeeded Chaderton, was a member of the Hampton Court conference, and its historian. It is impossible to read his account of it without being struck by the vast amount of flattery of the king on the part of the divines whose speeches he records, and in which he may be fairly considered as having a share by the fact of his recording it. Barlow was translated from Rochester to Lincoln in 1608. He was no doubt a learned man, and was one of the divines employed in constructing the Authorized Version of the Bible ; but as a bishop of the great diocese of Lincoln he was practically useless. He lived in his prebendal house at Westminster, near the Court, where he wrote a learned treatise on the Oath of Allegiance, but he seems to have moved to Buckden only to die, an event which took place in 1613.

Bishop Barlow, if not a very efficient pastor, nevertheless did not bring any scandal upon the see of Lincoln. This, however, can hardly be said of his successor. As Bishop Neill only occupied the see of Lincoln for three years, and as he occupied in succession five other sees, his somewhat equivocal reputation must not be allowed to cloud Lincoln alone. He began with Rochester, advanced to Lichfield, and from thence passed to Lincoln in 1614. Then he went on to Durham, from thence to Winchester, and culminated at York. He must have possessed the art of making himself peculiarly acceptable to the king, and we may easily perceive what

that art consisted in. He was ready to support the king's theology, as the condemnation and burning of Edward Wightman for heresy at Lichfield proved; he was ready to advocate the extremest absolute doctrines in Parliament, as his speeches in the House of Lords, and his tearful recantation of them when charged, demonstrated. He was ready to go the most indecent lengths in supporting the king's favourites, as his disgraceful conduct in the Essex divorce showed. It is not without reason that Mr. Gardiner writes—"Of all the sycophants who sought for power and place during the reigns of James and his son, Bishop Neill was justly regarded as the worst." It was his officious zeal in the divorce case which procured for Bishop Neill the translation from Lichfield to Lincoln. The see had certainly been promised (as Archbishop Abbot declares) to his brother, Dr. Robert Abbot. But the archbishop had opposed the divorce of Lady Essex, and his brother's chance vanished.

The only matter which requires to be noted in connection with Bishop Neill's short tenure of the see of Lincoln, is the visit paid to that city by King James I., and his entertainment there by the bishop. A very full and minute account of this visit is given in Nicholl's *Progresses*. The king spent the previous night at Belton, near Grantham, and then crossed the unenclosed heath towards Lincoln, coursing as he went. He was met at the outskirts of the city by the sheriffs, who escorted him to St. Catherine's Priory, then standing outside the Bar Gate. On the next day (March 28) he made a solemn entry into the

city, and was conducted to the cathedral. Entering at the west door, he kneeled on a cushion and made a short prayer, and then, under a canopy held over him by six prebendaries in their surplices, proceeded to the choir, the mayor bearing the sword before him. The service was said by the dean; the king then inspected the cathedral, and afterwards returned in state to St. Catherine's.

On Sunday, March 30, the king went to the cathedral in his "caroche," and was met at the west door by three bishops, Andrews, Montagu, and Neill. Service being ended the king was conducted in procession to the bishop's palace, where (according to Heylin) Bishop Neill gave him "as magnificent entertainment as the place and country could afford." The banquet must have been somewhat shorn of its splendour by the dilapidated condition of the palace, though a good deal had no doubt been done towards putting it in order. Soon afterwards the king passed on his way to Durham, closely attended by the favoured prelate, who quickly obtained the promotion to the richer and more magnificent preferment of Durham.

The diocese of Lincoln may be thought not to have lost much by the departure of this courtly prelate, but unfortunately it does not seem to have gained much by the appointment of his successor. This was Dr. George Montaigne, whose personal courage is lauded by Le Neve, as his epicurean tastes are stigmatized by John Milton, who speaks of his "canary-sucking and swan-eating palate." As Dr. Neill feasted the king at Lincoln, and was quickly

translated to Durham, so in like manner did Dr. Montaigne give a grand banquet to his Majesty at Buckden, which was followed quickly by his translation to London.

We come now to the consideration of the government of the diocese under a prelate of somewhat a different stamp—equally time-serving and self-seeking it may be—but a man of power and distinction, whose chequered career of influence and disgrace caused the diocese of Lincoln to be prominently before men's minds for a long period. John Williams, a Welshman both by birth and education, gained considerable reputation at Cambridge, and became a fellow of St. John's. He was fortunate enough to attract the notice of Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, who made him his chaplain. Preferments now came thick upon him. Two livings and four canonries, the deanery of Salisbury, followed by that of Westminster, which brought him into close intercourse with the king, and enabled him to give advice to his Majesty and to the favourite Buckingham which was thought very valuable, and rescued Buckingham from the odium attaching to the monopolies. So highly was the dean's talent prized, that, to the amazement of the country, when the great Bacon fell, the Great Seal was entrusted to the Dean of Westminster, who was very soon afterwards consecrated Bishop of Lincoln (1621). He still retained his deanery, the living of Walgrave, and a canonry in Lincoln Cathedral, so that Heylin could facetiously describe him as "a perfect diocese within himself."

During the remainder of the reign of James,

Williams was fully occupied with his legal and political duties, but when Charles succeeded, who never liked the bishop, he was relieved of these, and at last "bethought him of the duty of his pastoral staff," and proceeded to establish himself at Buckden. Williams has found an enthusiastic biographer in Bishop Hacket, who enters with the greatest zest into the account of the vast improvements and embellishments which the bishop effected in his episcopal house at Buckden. Nothing had been done to the episcopal house since the days of Bishop Russell in the time of Edward IV. Williams in a short time "turned a ruinous thing into a stately mansion." He pulled down the outhouses and rebuilt them in a better manner. "Within doors the cloisters were the trimmest part of his reparation; the window of the square beautified with stores of coloured glass. The pavement laid smooth and new. The walls on every side hung with pieces of exquisite workmanship in limning, collected and provided long before. The like and better was done for the chapel in all these circumstances, and with as much cost as it was capable of. For the oversight from the beginning was that it was the only place in the house which was too little." Besides this he expended large sums on the beautifying of the gardens and grounds; all the nurseries about London being ransacked for fair flowers and choice fruits. "The holy service of God was well ordered and observed at noon and at evening with music and organ exquisitely, as in the best cathedrals, and with such voices as the kingdom afforded not better for skill and sweetness, the bishop himself bearing the tenor part among them often." In his

palace he constantly entertained a number of distinguished guests, seldom sat at meat without some of the clergy, and made the poor sharers in his hospitality. At dinner, a chorister read a chapter of the Bible in the English translation, and at supper a gentleman read a chapter from the Latin version. He was visited by many of the leading Cambridge divines, and he helped to maintain many poor scholars at the Universities.

Nor did Bishop Williams confine his munificence to Buckden. The old palace of the Bishop of Lincoln was practically a ruin, though something had been done in the way of repairs by Bishop Neill. Bishop Williams took it vigorously in hand, and (according to Hacket) "brought it up to as much strength and comeliness as when it was first inhabited." He bought the library belonging to Dr. Day, and was preparing to build a room for it at Lincoln, when the troubles came and the books were scattered. At Lincoln College in Oxford he built a beautiful chapel, lined with cedar and embellished with magnificent stained glass windows.

The bishop was so sedulous a preacher that on that ground he was accused of Puritanism. He was also much interested in literary work, and had formed the design of bringing together and printing all the voluminous writings of his great predecessor, Robert Grosseteste, but this design unfortunately miscarried.

Bishop Williams' visit to Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire introduces us to one of the most interesting establishments to be found in the country, the "Protestant Nunnery" of Nicholas Ferrar. Ferrar,

distinguished as a traveller, and as a man of business, had retired to the village of Little Gidding, where he purchased a manor. Here, accompanied by his mother, who was wealthy, he proceeded to establish a religious community. He found the church in ruins and used as a barn, and the parish depopulated. His first care was to restore the church. Then, Mr. Ferrar having obtained Deacon's Orders from Bishop Laud, the plan of his little religious colony was arranged. The family consisted of about forty persons, who were all engaged in some religious work, and expected to spend a certain portion of the day and night in the Oratories. The Psalms were so arranged as to be recited by each during the twenty-four hours. Twice a day they went to church in procession, each making a low obeisance on entering and taking up their appointed places, and four times more to family devotions. More than a hundred school-children were regularly instructed by three school-masters, and on Sundays fed at the house, and Mr. Ferrar's nieces were taught medicine that they might be useful to the neighbouring poor. Athletic games were allowed for the young, while Mr. Ferrar occupied himself in literary labours, constructing Harmonies of the Old and New Testament, copies of which were presented to and much valued by King Charles.

Bishop Williams twice visited this religious retreat, gave his full sanction to all their arrangements, attended their services and preached. Bishop Williams was no doubt of a tolerant and receptive temper, but he was very ambitious, and seeing clearly enough the strength which the Puritan party was

gaining under the repressive administration of Laud, he laid himself out to court them. Laud, who owed his promotion to Williams, according to Bishop Hacket, persecuted him for fifteen years. At any rate his influence was sufficient to prevent Williams being summoned to the first two Parliaments of the reign of Charles I. To the third Parliament he was summoned and preached before the Lords at the fast which had been proclaimed, thereby greatly angering the king and the High Church bishops, declaiming strongly against the Court theology which advocated absolutism and the power of the king to exact taxes.

The anger felt against Williams by the king and his advisers caused the reviving of a charge which had been made against the bishop by Sir I. Lamb and Dr. Sibthorp, ecclesiastical commissioners, who, dining with the bishop at Buckden, declared that he had said to them that they had better not be too severe on the Puritans, as the king had told him he wished them to be treated mildly. Upon this the absurd charge was made against the bishop of revealing the king's secrets. A commission was appointed to investigate this, and had reported that there was no case against the bishop, but now, out of a desire to punish him, the matter was brought into the Star Chamber. A man named Kilvert was employed to prosecute the cause. It seems that one of the bishop's officers named Pregion, dining at the same table, denied that the bishop had used the words imputed. Upon this Kilvert, in order to weaken Pregion's evidence, brought a charge of immorality against him with a certain woman named Elizabeth Hodson. The

bishop, it is said, counter-plotted, offering a sum of money to the woman to swear that her illegitimate child was not the child of Pregon. Upon this the first charge was dropped, and another more serious charge was brought against the bishop, namely, the subornation of perjury. Before this came on for hearing in the Star Chamber, Williams had done something more to anger the king and Laud, and had placed himself in a position not likely to conduce towards an equitable trial.

In 1629, the parishioners of Grantham had complained to the bishop that their vicar, Mr. Titly, had moved the holy table from the midst of the chancel, where it had been wont to stand, to the east wall of the church, where it stood in the place of the ancient altar. The bishop, after due consideration, decided that the table when *not used* might stand at the east end, not *altar-wise* but *table wise*; but when used for Holy Communion should be carried into the midst of the chancel, or anywhere in the church where the minister could best be heard. To support this view the bishop composed and printed a *Letter to the Vicar of Grantham*. The view advocated was completely opposed to the practice of the bishop himself. In the cathedral of Lincoln, in the Abbey of Westminster, in the bishop's own chapel at Buckden, the holy table stood altar-wise and was never moved. It was also a view very distasteful to those in power, though as yet no authoritative decision had been given against it.

In 1634, however, Archbishop Laud issued his well-known Injunction for all holy tables to be placed altar-wise and protected by rails. Knowing that there

would be considerable difficulty in carrying out this order in the diocese of Lincoln, where the bishop had sanctioned a different arrangement, the archbishop determined to make a metropolitical visitation of the diocese, suspending for the time the jurisdiction of the bishop. No such visitation had been known in the diocese of Lincoln for one hundred years. Williams struggled in vain against it, and the archbishop's vicar-general, Sir N. Brent, with other commissioners, proceeded to carry out his Grace's policy as to the holy table with the utmost strictness. Certificates were required from the churchwardens of each parish that the order as to the table had been complied with. Not content with thus humbling the bishop in his own diocese, the archbishop set his chaplain, Peter Heylin, to refute the arguments of the *Letter to the Vicar of Grantham*.

In 1636 came out a tract called *A Coal from the Altar*. Hackett says—"Among all devices to thrust him under water that was sinking already, none was hatched of more despite and indignity than a book published by a bluster-master anno 1636 to defame a letter sent nine years before to some divines in the neighbourhood of Grantham to resolve a doubt upon the site of the communion table or altar. If any ever had a wolf by the ear the bishop was in that quandary upon this provocation." Should he leave this attack unnoticed men would suppose that he was unable to defend his position. Should he answer it, his arguments would certainly be brought against him in the Star Chamber trial which was hanging over him. However, the bishop's literary ardour carried the day against possible dangers, and he proceeded to answer

Heylin's *Coal from the Altar* in a tract called *The Holy Table, Name and Thing, by a Lincolnshire Minister*. It would have been far better had the bishop not attempted the very transparent disguise under which the book appeared. This seemed to indicate a want of straightforwardness, which was much aggravated by the licence prefixed to the book, in which it was described as "written by some minister in this diocese," and licensed to be printed and published in such places where as ordinary he was enabled and licensed so to do. He pretends to believe that D. Coal was a divine of Queen Mary's days, and that the book was written long before in answer to him. Heylin's answer immediately followed (*Antidotum Lincolnense*) with his name attached. This is composed in much the same spirit as Williams's book, viz. a union of quibbling and railing, and but little credit is due to either of the disputants.

The trial of the bishop for tampering with the king's witnesses came on July 11, 1637, and lasted ten days. Great interest was felt in it by the people, who all sided with Williams. It seems to have been unfairly conducted, and Williams was fined £10,000 to the Crown and £1000 to Sir John Monson, whom, it was said, he had slandered. He was to be imprisoned in the Tower during his Majesty's pleasure, and to be suspended from all his ecclesiastical functions. The bishop being lodged in the Tower, his enemies were able to deal as they pleased with his goods, and if his biographer is to be believed, the most shameful spoliation and waste was carried on at Buckden. All the fine furniture and costly surroundings which

Williams had brought together were dissipated and sold for mean sums, his papers were ransacked, and unfortunately some very compromising letters which had been addressed to him by Mr. Osbaldeston, the master of Westminster School, were discovered. Williams, unhappily for his reputation, swore that he had never received such letters, but Bishop Hacket is forced to admit that a letter of his which was discovered "tuned somewhat like a replication to them." Again the bishop was fined £8000.

But a change was approaching. The country was beginning to weary of being governed autocratically, and threatening signs abounded when the Short Parliament of 1640 met. It was thought that it would be a politic thing to liberate the Bishop of Lincoln. The king, however, could not bring himself to do this, and the House of Lords solved the difficulty by sending Black Rod to the Lieutenant of the Tower with orders to bring the bishop to the House. Williams, once again among his brethren, does not seem to have cherished any feelings of enmity for his harsh treatment. The king made advances to him which he readily accepted, but if Charles expected to obtain any solid advantage from the bishop's advice he was doomed to be disappointed. Indeed the greatest and most shameful mistake of his reign—the surrender of Lord Strafford—was directly due to the urgent advice of Williams. Concession and yielding to the popular cry was the guiding principle with the bishop. Thus, as chairman of the Ritual Commission, which sat in the Jerusalem Chamber, he showed himself ready to deal with the

Prayer Book, and indeed with the whole status of the Church of England, very much as the Puritans desired, and when these concessions were scoffed at, and the cry for the entire removal of the bishops became violent, Williams it was who gave the fatal advice to his brethren to withdraw from Parliament and to make a protest against the legality of all Acts done in their absence. For this advice and for yielding to it eleven bishops were committed to the Tower, and Williams, now Archbishop of York, was once more a prisoner. It had been thought politic to promote him as a popular favourite, but in fact his popularity had by this time altogether departed, and he was now one of the best hated men in England.

The diocese of Lincoln has no further concern with him, though the remainder of his life down to his tragical death at Llandegai in 1651 is full of interest. He was a striking figure in those evil days, but though possessed of great talents and much liberality, he was deficient in moral qualities, and cannot be regarded as a great man. It has been said that in the threatening state of the people towards the Church it was thought well to promote Williams as a popular favourite. On the same ground his successor was selected, together with the rest of a batch of bishops then consecrated (February 1642). This successor was Thomas Winniffe, Dean of St. Paul's, a man famous as a preacher, and, as far as can be judged, very capable of administering a diocese well. But the diocese never had the opportunity of judging of his powers. The government of the Church by bishops was quickly in abeyance. It was impossible for Winniffe openly

to exercise his episcopal office. He lived to see his episcopal palace at Lincoln, on which his predecessor had expended so much, demolished, and his other house at Buckden, with all the revenues of the see, taken from him; passing his life quietly and unmolested as parson of Lambourn, where he died in 1654. Of the troublous time through which Dr. Winniffe lived, and of the miseries inflicted upon the clergy at that period, we proceed to speak in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CLERGY DURING THE GREAT REBELLION

THE various measures taken by the Long Parliament against the Church in the times of the Great Rebellion and the Commonwealth belong to the general history of the Church of England. For the history of a diocese, it will only be necessary to inquire what special troubles and oppressions fell upon the clergy of that particular portion of the Church comprised within its limits. Nor will it be necessary to inquire strictly into the causes and grounds upon which each incumbent was deprived of his benefice. These, indeed, were manifold. Some clergy were deprived as *scandalous ministers* by the parliamentary committees or the country committees which sprang from them. Some were deprived as *malignants*, i. e. for supporting the cause of the king. Some (and these were the majority) for refusing to sign the Covenant. All authorities agree that the accusations made against the clergy were readily received, even when made by the most disreputable persons; that no fair trial was accorded to them; that the plundering of their goods, ill-treatment and

imprisonment were inflicted upon them; that no proper provision was made for the support of their families, which were reduced to beggary; and that the whole treatment of the clergy under the Long Parliament was equivalent to a most severe and bitter persecution.

The historian of the sufferings of the clergy, writing in the following century,¹ was not able to collect the details of all the vast number of the deprivations, the total of which he puts at seven thousand.² But, with praiseworthy diligence, he has brought together a vast mass of evidence, amply sufficient to give us a full conception of the intensity of the hardships then endured by the clergy.

The diocese of Lincoln may be regarded as specially unfortunate at this period of trial, in that a great part of it, viz. Lincolnshire, Hertfordshire, and Huntingdonshire, formed part of the district specially committed to the Earl of Manchester to harry and despoil according to his pleasure. This great oppressor of the Church nominated committees for all the counties in his charge (Feb. 24, 1643), with power to call before them "all ministers or school-masters that are scandalous in their lives, with full power and liberty to send for any witnesses, and to certify the names of such ministers, with the charge and proof against them," to him. Then he authorizes and appoints them to administer the Covenant. As the charge of being *scandalous* was held to be sufficiently

¹ Walker's folio was published in 1714.

² The numbers are most variously estimated. Mr. White boasted that he had got rid of eight thousand. But this, as well as Walker's estimate, is very much exaggerated.

established by the use of any part of the ceremonial established by Archbishop Laud; by praying for the king; by the use of any sort of amusement, as well as by frequenting the ale-house and by any act of immorality, the clergy had but little chance to escape even before the administration of the Covenant. It was evident that this latter test could not be accepted by any honest man, and in consequence the "associated counties" were doubtless pretty thoroughly denuded of their clergy.

To proceed to particulars. Of the bishop, Dr. Winniffe, we have already spoken. He appears to have lived quietly at Lambourn, where he died in 1654. The dean, Anthony Topham, died early in the time of the troubles, and no successor was appointed. Dr. Wynne, Archdeacon of Lincoln, died in 1644, in possession, as it appears, of his benefice of Scotter, where he was buried. He was succeeded by Dr. Throckmorton, who was said to have endured "particular and eminent sufferings," but the details are not known. Of Dr. Thorn, Archdeacon of Bucks and Rector of St. Cuthberts, Bedford, it is recorded that he was seized as he came out of his pulpit and imprisoned. Charges were made against him for what he had preached, but nothing could be substantiated, and he appears to have been imprisoned again, in spite of the protests of his parishioners, simply on the ground that he was a *malignant*, and had great influence in his neighbourhood.

The Archdeacon of Bedford, Dr. Hacket, who was also Rector of St. Andrews, Holborn, and of Cheam, Surrey, was a very prominent personage. He was

the person selected by the clergy to argue in the House of Commons against the passing of the "Root and Branch" Bill, and all accounts agree that he did this admirably. He was allowed to retire to his benefice of Cheam in Surrey, but here he was seized and imprisoned for a time. At the Restoration he became Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, showing great liberality in the restoration of his cathedral. He is best known to us by his elaborate *Life of Archbishop Williams*.

Suddington, Archdeacon of Stow, was sequestered from his benefice, but lived to be restored. Dr. Jeremiah Stephens, Prebendary of Biggleswade, and Rector of Wotton and Quinton, Northants, was a very learned man. Information was laid against him by six most disreputable characters, and he was plundered, sequestered, and imprisoned, but happily survived his troubles, and died at Wotton.

In giving the amount of the parochial clergy of the diocese who were sequestered, plundered, and imprisoned, as recorded by Walker, it must be remembered that only a few of the cases could become known to him, investigating as he did a century afterwards; that no reliable statistics were to be found; and though his industry has heaped together a great mass of materials, yet these really represent but a small part of the details of the sufferings of the loyal clergy. They are, however, sufficient to give a clear idea of what those sufferings were, and we cannot but be struck with pity and horror by what these unfortunate men and their families had to endure. The extreme cruelty which ejected wife and

children from a glebe house, often late at night, and caused them to seek shelter in a barn or stable, or in the porch of the church, as we find them frequently doing ; the atrocious injustice which sequestered not only the profits of the living, but the temporal estate of the clergy, forcing them to compound for it at large sums ; the foul accusations hurled against them, and deliberately printed and circulated, as in White's *Century of Scandalous Ministers*, make this persecution almost unique in the horror of its details.

Of the cases mentioned by Walker of sequestration and ejection, generally accompanied by gross ill-usage, and often followed by imprisonment, the numbers for the several counties of the diocese of Lincoln are as follows—Huntingdonshire, 13 ; Hertfordshire, 31 ; Buckingham, 15 ; Bedford, 8 ; Leicestershire, 61 ; Lincolnshire, 37. Total, 165 incumbents, not counting curates.

In Huntingdonshire there were many cases of gross ill-usage, plundering, and imprisonment. The most conspicuous victim, perhaps, was Barnabas Oley, well known by his publication of the works of George Herbert and Thomas Jackson. He was not only ejected from the Mastership of Clare Hall, but also from his living of Great Gransden, and reduced to abject poverty. He survived, however, till the Restoration, when he was brought back and became archdeacon.

In Hertfordshire, Mr. John Clerk, Rector of North Mimms, was not only ejected, but banished to the Caribbean islands. Dr. Pory, Rector of Thorly, was also Rector of St. Margaret's, London. He was

ejected from both benefices, plundered, and obliged to fly to escape imprisonment. But he lived to become Canon of St. Paul's, and Archdeacon of Middlesex.

Another conspicuous man in this county was Richard Taylor, Rector of Westmile and Ashendon, and Prebendary of St. Paul's. He had the honour of being included in White's *Century*, and the charges alleged against him to constitute him a "scandalous priest" are—bowing to the altar; setting up altar-rails; obliging the people to come up to the altar to receive the elements; urging confession; keeping a picture of Christ in his parlour; refusing to preach twice on the Sunday; bowing to a cross on the font; sending goods to market on a Sunday. No immorality is charged against him, which is quite an exceptional thing when so many ecclesiastical delinquencies could be reckoned up.

None of these things probably could be alleged against Mr. Samuel Ward, Rector of Much Meriden, and Master of Sidney Sussex College in Cambridge. He was esteemed a Puritan, and as such was put into Archbishop Williams's Ritual Commission. But he was favourable to the king's cause, and in consequence was plundered and imprisoned, and died in great poverty.

In Buckinghamshire, Mr. Oakeley, Vicar of Hilsden, was subjected to exceptional bad usage, being made to walk to prison barefoot in the winter, leaving his wife and numerous family in utter poverty. The Rector of Tyringham was also most barbarously used, being stripped bare to his shirt, and severely wounded

by a party of troopers, and driven before them to prison in this suffering state.

Bedfordshire would seem to have been specially fortunate in escaping outrages, but it was not to be supposed that Dr. Pocklington, Rector of Yelvedon, and Canon of Windsor, would avoid censure. He had taken a prominent part in supporting Laud's theology, and written against the puritanical observance of "the Sabbath," so that, as a matter of course, he was ejected from his benefices, and his books burned by the common hangman.

Leicestershire suffered very severely, no less than sixty-one cases of ejectment being chronicled by Walker. A lamentable persecution was that of Mr. John Case, Rector of Pickwell, who was turned out of his house with a wife and six children, and appears to have been continually persecuted from place to place until his death in 1657. Michael Honynood, Vicar of Keyworth, falling under persecution in spite of his great reputation for learning, had the good fortune to escape to Utrecht, where he lived safely during the troubles. He returned at the Restoration, and was advanced to the deanery of Lincoln, signaling his incumbency by the building of the library, and commencing the grand collection of books now in the cathedral library.

The case of Dr. Hudson, Rector of Market Bosworth and of Uffington in Lincolnshire, introduces us to the fighting parson, of whom there were not a few in the king's armies. Dr. Hudson was wonderfully skilful in disguises, and so perfectly acquainted with the country that he was chosen to be the king's guide

when he made his ill-fated journey from Newark to Newcastle. After a spirited and determined resistance to the Parliamentary forces at the siege of Woodcroft House, Dr. Hudson was wounded, and hurled from the tower into the moat, where he perished. He was a man of considerable estate, but like so many others gave up all at the call of loyalty.

The town of Stamford in Lincolnshire would seem to have been a very hotbed of loyal clergy, as all the incumbents there were dispossessed, and most grievous accusations made against them of "tippling" and "sabbath-breaking," and such other amenities as Mr. White, in his *Century*, thought fit to indulge in.

A special interest attaches to the case of Mr. Gibson, Vicar of Horncastle, who must have been a model divine and an admirable parish priest. He had preached before the much-hated Convocation of 1640, which was enough to cause him to be seized and carried to Hull, where he was imprisoned for three or four months. The strange charge of *Ormanism* was then made against him by some of his parishioners, who probably intended Arminianism, and he was put into the county gaol at Lincoln. He was now exchanged for a Presbyterian minister, but all his goods were plundered and his cattle taken away. A second time he was imprisoned at Lincoln, then at Tattershall. The living was sequestered August 7, 1644. When released from prison, Mr. Gibson lived in a small cottage near Horncastle, and supported himself by teaching. He then obtained the Mastership of the school at Newark, afterwards that of Sleaford,

and happily lived to the Restoration, when he was brought back to his vicarage and lived to a good old age, dying Vicar of Horncastle in 1674, at the age of eighty-four. It is recorded of him that so diligent was he in his parish, that out of 250 families living in the town only one was Dissenting.

In Robert Sanderson, Rector of Boothby Pagnell, the usurping authorities had to deal with one of the great ornaments of the English Church. Sanderson had resigned his fellowship at Lincoln College on his marriage, and turned from his rising reputation in the University of Oxford to become the parish priest of Boothby Pagnell. His light, however, could not be hid in this obscurity, and at the instance of Archbishop Laud, who knew him well, he was brought out to be chaplain to the king. In 1636 he attended Charles in his journey to Oxford, and was made Doctor of Divinity. In 1642 he was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity, in which office he specially signalized himself by drawing up the crushing answer to the Covenant made by the University. Expelled from Oxford in 1648, he retired to Boothby Pagnell, which had been sequestered, but where he was allowed to remain in exchange for Mr. Clarke, a neighbouring Puritanical minister, who had been captured by the king's forces. The sequestration was taken off, but Sanderson was exposed to attacks and insults from rude soldiers who entered his church and tore the Prayer Book out of his hands. He was forced to conduct the service from memory, and we find him also helping to conduct divine service at the neighbouring church of Grantham. We shall

have to return to him when happily seated as bishop in the cathedral church of Lincoln.

This noble church remained during the troubles in a most miserable plight. In 1644 it was entered by the troopers of the Earl of Manchester. Evelyn tells us in his *Diary*, that when he visited the cathedral in 1654 he heard that the soldiers had knocked off most of the brasses from the gravestones, so that few inscriptions were left, and that they went in with their axes and hammers and shut themselves in till they had rent and torn off some barge-loads of metal, not sparing even the monuments of the dead. In *Mercurius Aulicus* we are informed that these troopers "pulled down the brave carved works, tore in pieces the monuments and tombs, shot down escutcheons and arms of benefactors, and filled each corner of the holy place with their own and horses' dung in a most horrid manner." With what bitter feelings must such profanation have been witnessed by all those who still retained any regard for sacred things. Baxter, and after him Neal, tried to extol the religious character of the soldiers who served the Parliament in contrast to the reckless character of the Royalists, but while such things were enacted without scruple in every cathedral in the land, it is impossible to accept this view.

When so large a number of clergy were ejected from their parishes and silenced, how did the parishes fare, and who supplied the places of the ejected ministers? Up to the period of the king's murder and the rise into power of the Independents, the generality of those appointed to livings were Presbyterians. There

were many cases, indeed, in which no appointments were made, but the benefice was seized by any fanatic who had sufficient assurance. But it may be taken that so long as the power of the Westminster Assembly lasted, that it is to say for some four or five years after its meeting, Presbyterianism was the established religion, and Presbyterians were appointed to all the better and more valuable benefices. John Milton accuses the Assembly of Divines of looking greedily out for preferment, and seizing everything they could get. The use of the Common Prayer was now illegal, but through the whole of the Rebellion period there was but slight observance of what was legal, and the greatest variety of practice prevailed in the different churches. Many clergy doubtless continued to use the Prayer Book in spite of the laws. The Directory does not appear to have been ever generally used. The intruding ministers used extemporary prayer according to their fancies. On one point there seems a general agreement of testimony, namely, the almost complete disuse of the celebration of the Sacraments. The Holy Communion was scarce ever publicly celebrated, and baptisms rarely administered. When the "Engagement" became law, and it was merely necessary to swear to the *de facto* Government, a considerable number of the ejected clergy again obtained employment,¹ though many were a second time ejected by that famous body "The Triers." The laws forbidding clergy to be school-masters or tutors were especially hard upon the ejected clergy, as many

¹ Sanderson and some other divines recommended the taking of the "Engagement."

of them had been thus employed, and there is no doubt that not a few were reduced to the most menial occupations, and lived in abject poverty.

As regards the way in which the most loyal and orthodox conducted their services we can do no better than quote the practice of Dr. Sanderson as given by himself, inasmuch as he is in a special way connected with the diocese of Lincoln. It must be premised that Dr. Hammond strongly disapproved of Sanderson's practice of mutilating the Liturgy, as also of his having written in favour of the clergy taking the "Engagement." He says—"He (Dr. Sanderson) may do well to consider whether if from writing for the Engagement first, and then laying aside the Liturgy, it will be easy to reconcile these to his former writings and persuasions." In another letter he says—"I pray you to endeavour to infuse some courage into him, the want of which may betray his reason. His opinion expressed may betray many."¹ It will probably be judged that Hammond was needlessly scrupulous, and that Dr. Sanderson's was the wiser course. He describes it as follows ²—

"So long as my congregation continued unmixed with soldiers (as well after as before the ordinance for abolishing of Common Prayer), I continued the use of it as I had ever formerly done in the most peaceable and ordinary times, not omitting those very prayers the silencing of which I could not but know to have been chiefly aimed at in the ordinance, viz. those for the king, the queen, and the bishops." Even when soldiers were casually present he proceeded

¹ *Harleian MSS.* 6492.

² In a letter written in 1652,

in this course for a time ; but at last a troop came that were so enraged that "they seized on the book and tore it all to pieces." During their continuance for six months he discontinued the practice, and used the Confession, the Lord's Prayer, the Versicles, and the Psalms, and sometimes the Creed and the Decalogue. In the Lord's Supper, Marriage, Burial of the Dead, and Churching of Women he used the ancient offices without alteration. In the Daily Service he was obliged to be cautious. At the Lord's Supper he says, "I was the more secure, because I was assured none of the soldiers would be present." After the departure of this troop he resumed his former practice. "I took the liberty to use the whole Liturgy, or but some part of it, omitting sometimes more, sometimes less, especially if any soldiers or unknown persons happened to be present. But all the while the substance of what I omitted I contrived into my prayer before the sermon."

For two years he proceeded in this way, when he was informed of a complaint made against him to the Parliament. He then resolved to forego the use of the Common Prayer rather than forsake his ministry. From this time he adopted a new course, commencing with the Holy Scriptures, and an exhortation to confession of sin, derived from the General Confession of sin, and the Absolution, using the same words "purposely here and there misplaced." Then came the Confession with some additions, the Lord's Prayer, the Versicles, the Psalms, and the First Lesson for the day. Sometimes he modelled the Litany into short collects. Such was his practice when the letter was

written, and "is like still to be unless some happy change of affairs restore us the liberty of using the old way again."¹

Perhaps Jeremy Taylor's practice of setting out a new book of offices derived from ancient sources, to be used as long as the Common Prayer was prohibited, was a wiser and more edifying method than this of Sanderson's.

We may well commiserate the orthodox clergy in the great straits into which they were driven by the prevalent oppression. During the whole period of the Commonwealth there was no relief for them. The edict of 1655 was the most rigorous and oppressive of all. The use of the Prayer Book, even in private houses, was proscribed. It was but little consolation to the ejected clergy that the more respectable Presbyterians were subjected to outrages as well as themselves. All good men must have deplored the horrible prevalence of blasphemy and profanity among the various wild sects whose ravings are recorded in Baxter's *Life* and Edwards's *Gangræna*. The sighs and prayers of the oppressed Church of England were at length heard and answered.

The country, tired and exhausted with fanaticism, brought back the Monarchy and the Church, and those of the ejected clergy who had survived the long period of the troubles came back at once to their benefices. These, however, were but a small proportion of those who had been ejected. Out of the 165 in the diocese of Lincoln who are mentioned as having been driven out, only thirty-one are given by

¹ Lathbury's *History of the Prayer Book*, p. 288.

Walker as having lived to the Restoration. The very large number of intruded incumbents, many of them anything but loyal ministers of the Church of England, furnished a great difficulty to the Church of the Restoration.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RESTORATION PERIOD

AT the Restoration it was provided by an early Act of Parliament that all incumbents who had been illegally ejected from their benefices under the Parliament and Commonwealth should at once return to them without re-induction, and that those who had been intruded should deliver up occupation, being made liable for dilapidations and for arrears of fifths. There is a general testimony that the fifths intended for the support of the families of the sequestered clergy had been very irregularly, and, in many cases, not at all paid. The number of incumbents dispossessed by this Act is said to have amounted to a thousand. But if it was the case, as it appears to be, that there were only 31 survivors out of the 156 deprived in the diocese of Lincoln, this is probably an exaggeration. All those, however irregularly instituted, who were in occupation of livings where the incumbent had died, remained for the present undisturbed.

The diocese of Lincoln was fortunate in obtaining an admirable bishop in Dr. Robert Sanderson, and

with Michael Honywood as dean, whose devotion to the cathedral is attested by his erection of the great library, the much-abused cathedral church had a prospect of restoration to decency and order. But irreparable mischief had been done. From a survey of the monuments happily made by Sir W. Dugdale before the troubles, in conjunction with Dr. Sanderson, then a canon of the cathedral, and published by Mr. Peck in his *Desiderata Curiosa*, it appears that about 180 monuments, which were in the cathedral in 1641, have for the most part disappeared. The inscribed brasses were torn from the gravestones, the rich brass gates to the choir and to divers of the chantry chapels were pulled down, the stained windows were broken, and the church was utterly wrecked. The destruction appears to have been completed by the repairing of the nave at the end of the eighteenth century, when some hundred tombstones were removed from the nave alone and dispersed into various quarters, so that the knowledge of the place of the tombs of the illustrious dead was quite lost.

Bishop Sanderson's heart was earnestly set on providing some help for the poor suffering clergy who returned to their benefices in great poverty in many cases, their private estates having been seized upon as well as their ecclesiastical revenues. Isaak Walton says—"Dr. Sanderson's behaviour was with such condescension and obligingness to the meanest of his clergy as to know and be known to most of them. . . . The bishop's chief house at Buckden in the county of Huntingdon, the usual residence of his

predecessors (for it stands about the midst of his diocese), having been, at his consecration, a great part of it demolished, and what was left standing under a visible decay, was by him undertaken to be repaired ; and it was performed with great speed, care and charge." And to this it may be added, that the king having by an injunction commended to the care of the bishops, deans and prebendaries of all cathedral churches " the repair of them, their houses, and augmentations of the revenue of small vicarages," he, when he was repairing Buckden, did also augment the last, as fast as fines were paid for renewing leases ; so fast that a friend taking notice of his bounty, was so bold as to advise him to remember " he was under the first-fruits, and that he was old, and had a wife and children that were yet but meanly provided for, especially if his dignity were considered." To whom he made a mild and thankful answer, saying—" It would not become a Christian bishop to suffer those houses built by his predecessors to be ruined for want of repair, and less justifiable to suffer any of those poor vicars that were called to so high a calling as to sacrifice at God's altar, to eat the bread of sorrow constantly when he had the power by a small augmentation to turn it into the bread of cheerfulness. And as for his wife and children he hoped to leave them a competence ; and in the hands of God, that would protect all who kept innocence, and trusted in His providence and protection, which he had always found enough to make and keep him happy." ¹

A bishop of such a temper was not likely to inflict

¹ Wordsworth, *Ecc. Biography*, vol. iv., p. 459.

upon the Nonconformist divines in his diocese any unnecessary trouble and persecution. The zeal of some Churchmen (excusable under the circumstances) had led them, before the passing of the Act of Uniformity, to lay information against those incumbents who did not use the form of Common Prayer prescribed by law. We read of no less than fifty true bills being found at the Assizes in Exeter. But Bishop Sanderson was not willing to indulge this unnecessary strictness. Bishop Sanderson, says Neal, "had a roll of Nonconformist ministers under his angry eye, but when he was near his end he ordered the roll to be burnt, and said he would die in peace."¹

When the fated day came on the Feast of St. Bartholomew, and all were obliged to conform or vacate their livings, we may be sure that Bishop Sanderson was one of those ordinaries who (as Nonconformist writers acknowledge) allowed extra time when there had been any difficulty either about seeing the amended Prayer Book, or any other special reason justifying delay. As to the number of ministers finally ejected in the diocese of Lincoln for refusing the terms of conformity, we are in a considerable difficulty here as in the case of the Royalist clergy on account of the great variation in the statements of the total numbers of the ejected, which are made to vary from 2000 to 500. Taking Calamy's list, which is one of the highest, we find the numbers assigned to the various counties of the diocese of Lincoln to be as follows, viz. Lincolnshire, 48 ejections; Nonconformists conformed, 4. Leicestershire,

¹ *Puritans*, vol. iv., p. 315.

39 ejected; 5 conformed. Bedfordshire, 12 ejected; 1 conformed. Hertford, 29 ejected. Huntingdon, 6 ejected. Buckinghamshire, 27 ejected; 1 conformed. Total ejected, 161; conformed, 11.

Calamy gives the highest characters to many of those ejected, and no doubt many were admirably devoted men and much valued by their flocks. But it was absolutely necessary for the very existence of the Church that conformity should be enforced at whatever risk or cost, and although the retrospective clauses of the Act of Uniformity are not justifiable, yet the undertaking to accept and use the Book of Common Prayer, and to seek episcopal orders when not already ordained, were conditions quite indispensable.

There is abundant evidence that things were made as easy as possible for the Nonconformists in the diocese of Lincoln. Mr. Sylvester, Incumbent of Gunnerby, well known for his *Life of Baxter*, was sent for by Bishop Sanderson, "entreated most courteously, and offered considerable preferment if he would conform." But though much urged, he could not bring himself to accept the conditions.¹ The bishops must have been put to the utmost difficulty in finding substitutes for the great number of ministers who suddenly left their churches; and many parishes must have remained without incumbents for a considerable time. Thus we are told of the parishes of Marton and Torksey being without a minister for many years,² and this must have been the case in many country cures.

¹ Calamy, vol. ii., p. 449.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 462.

On the death of the great Sanderson in 1663, the see was filled by the translation of Dr. Benjamin Laney from Peterborough. The new bishop was seventy-two years of age when promoted, and was probably not much inclined for active work. At any rate he is reckoned by the Puritan writers as a tolerant bishop, and suffered a Puritan divine to minister undisturbed in a church in the neighbourhood of Buckden. As to his own opinions they were High Church and absolutist. He had been a favourite chaplain of Charles I., and after the Restoration was a favourite preacher at Whitehall.

Nonconformity seems rather to have grown and increased in the diocese of Lincoln. "It is observable," says Calamy, "that several in this county (Lincoln) quitted the Church party and came among the Nonconformists some years after Bartholomew Day." He instances Mr. John Spademan of Swayton, Mr. John Rostride, Vicar of Kirton, near Boston, Mr. Burroughs of Frampton, and Mr. Scoffin of Brothertoft.¹ Had these secessions anything to do with the high doctrines advocated by the bishop and doubtless enforced in his charges, or did they proceed from sheer disgust at the miserable persecutions to which the Nonconformists were subjected, and for which the Church in part at least is responsible? Not that Bishops Sanderson and Laney, or their successor Bishop Fuller, seem to have been personally responsible for persecutions. But they lived in the time of Five Mile Acts, and the hateful trade of informers, and however mild and tolerant they may have been,

¹ Calamy, vol. ii., p. 460.

the odium of persecution must have more or less attached to them.

Bishop Fuller, who succeeded Laney in 1667, had held an Irish bishopric, and several previous appointments in Ireland, on which he does not appear to have bestowed much personal attention. The Chapter of Lincoln, desirous to have more of the bishop's company than they were likely to have if he resided constantly at Buckden, made arrangements for providing him with the house in the Close lately in the tenancy of Sir Adrian Scrope or his assigns, and there is evidence that the bishop did give Lincoln somewhat of his presence, and that he took a considerable interest in the restoration of the cathedral. As regards the ancient house of the Bishops of Lincoln, it now lay completely in ruins. It has been said that a considerable amount in restoration and repair had been expended on it by Bishop Williams. But when Lincoln was captured by the Parliamentary forces in May 1644, the house was completely devastated, stripped of all its valuables, and turned into a common prison, where many of the ejected clergy soon found themselves. It was a fitting and necessary act then for the Dean and Chapter to find another house for the bishop if they desired to have him at all in Lincoln.

Bishop Fuller was a friend of Samuel Pepys, who frequently describes him as a "good-natured man," and as "very good company." A man of this popular character might do much in softening the acerbities of the period. A letter of his (printed by the Surtees Society) mentions his intention of giving a pair of brass candlesticks to the altar, which are still

preserved; and on the restored tomb of St. Hugh he has recorded in Latin verse his appreciation of his great predecessor. "It is only marble that we can give, it should have been gold, as it was before the madness of these latter days."¹

The diocese did not gain much by the exchange of a man of this temper for the time-serving and negligent Thomas Barlow (1675). Indeed a more unfortunate promotion could hardly have been made than that of this very learned but very useless divine, who from his entire neglect of his cathedral city gained the sobriquet of the "Bishop of Buckden who never saw Lincoln."² With indecent eagerness, on the very day of Bishop Fuller's death, he is said to have obtained from the easy Charles, through two of his former pupils, then Secretaries of State, though against the wishes of Archbishop Sheldon, the promise of the see, and to have, "without an hour's delay," kissed hands on the appointment. He was consecrated June 27, the place being Ely Chapel, and Morley of Winchester the officiating prelate, instead of, as was customary, the archbishop himself at Lambeth. Evelyn records his presence at the consecration of his "worldly and learned friend," which was "succeeded by a magnificent feast." Resignation

¹ St. Hugh's shrine was made of beaten gold, and was in length eight feet, and four feet broad. It was taken away by virtue of a commission in Henry VIII.'s time, 1542, when a great spoliation of the cathedral took place.

² Canon Venables (to whom this work was originally entrusted) having written a very able sketch of Bishop Barlow and his work in the *Lincoln Diocesan Magazine* for March 1890, I feel bound to reproduce it as he himself probably would have done.

was not one of Barlow's virtues, and he retained his archdeaconry "in commendam" for a couple of years.

Barlow's episcopate was characterized by little but learned inertia. He was in his sixty-ninth year when he undertook the responsibilities of the enormous diocese, then reaching from the Humber to the Thames, and embracing five counties, besides that of Lincoln itself. His previous life had been spent in his study, among the books he loved so dearly, reading incessantly, "writing much, but publishing little," nor could it be reasonably expected that he could all at once change its course. He betook himself to the episcopal palace at Buckden, where he resided continuously, and was little seen in other parts of his diocese. He was charged with never having entered his cathedral church after his consecration. Dean Honynwood wrote courteously to urge him to visit Lincoln. Barlow thanked him for his "friendly advice." He had "seen Lincoln, and loved the place, and thought it the fittest place for his abode, both for other reasons, and principally for the happiness which he should enjoy in the society of the dean himself and their joint brethren." But "there were some reasons against it which, when he had the happiness of seeing him, he would communicate, and until he could make better accommodation for his residence, he must awhile continue at Buckden." More hollow words were seldom written.

His predecessor, Fuller, had had a house assigned to him in the Close by the dean and chapter, in lieu of the ruined palace, in which, if he had so minded,

Barlow might have resided with comfort to himself and advantage to the diocese. But though his continued absence from Lincoln became a matter of public scandal, evoking remonstrance from his own archdeacons, from the Marquis of Halifax and others, the "reasons" alleged continued in full force to his death, sixteen years after the date of this letter. He even posed as an injured and maligned person, the victim of religious spite, asserting that the real ground of complaint was not his absence from Lincoln, but his being "an enemy to Rome and the miscalled Catholic religion, which, God willing, while he lived he ever would be."

Barlow was always ready to manifest hostility to Roman doctrines and practices, so long as it fell in with popular feeling. During the passing madness of the Papist Plot in 1678 he publicly declared his rooted enmity to the papists, and to their supposed leader, the Duke of York; and when, on the proposed exclusion of Roman Catholic peers from the House of Lords, Bishop Ganning of Ely defended the Church of Rome from the charge of idolatry, Barlow answered him with "much vehemence and learning." As a still further proof of his "inalienable opposition" to Rome, when two years later the madness was at its height, and the heir to the throne had himself been presented as a popish recusant, he seized the time to lash the popular mind to still further fury by printing the bulls of Pius V. and Paul III., pronouncing the excommunication and deposition of Elizabeth and Henry VIII., with inflammatory notes and proofs of the identity of the pope with "the great Anti-

christ," the man of sin and the son of perdition ; and in a subsequent publication answered the question "whether the Turk or the Pope was the greater Antichrist," against the latter.

But all this vehement denunciation of Rome was brought to a sudden and decided close by the death of Charles II., and the accession of a declared Roman Catholic as sovereign. Barlow's policy and line of conduct were at once reversed. He was among the first to declare his loyal affection for his new monarch, and on the issue of James's first Declaration for liberty of conscience, he, writes Eachard, was one of the four bishops who, gained by the Court, carried their truckling meanness to so shameful a pitch as to present an address to the king, thanking him for permitting the bishops and clergy the free exercise of their religion and the quiet enjoyment of their temporalities. This address he caused to be signed by six hundred of his clergy, and expressed great vexation that he could not induce Gardiner, then sub-dean, and afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, to add his name.

On the issue of the famous second Declaration, which was one of the chief moving causes of the Revolution, Barlow, probably awaking to the turn things were likely to take, addressed a letter to his clergy couched in such ambiguous terms as to secure him from being compromised, whatever might be the issue of the impending struggle.

A month after this characteristic letter, the acquittal of the seven bishops sent an electric shock of joy through the whole kingdom. How Barlow com-

ported himself in that crisis we are not informed. But a few months later we find him calmly voting among the bishops that James had abdicated, and taking the oaths to William and Mary, while, that his own loyalty might be freed from the doubt which might otherwise attach to it, he manifested a busy zeal to secure that of his diocese. According to Wood, "no bishop was more ready to put in and supply the places of the clergy who refused the oath of allegiance, the moment the time given had expired." His own life was now fast drawing to a close. He hardly survived the Revolution two years, and died at Buckden in the eighty-fifth year of his age, October 8, 1691, and was buried in the chancel of the parish church, and, by his own desire, in the same grave with his predecessor and namesake, William Barlow, who died in 1613. He was never married.

Barlow's administration of his diocese was far from exhibiting the liberality towards Nonconformists to be expected from a warm supporter of the projected measures for comprehension. In 1684 the magistrates of Bedford having issued a "sharp notice," enforcing strict conformity, Barlow, ever discreetly following the tide, issued an order requiring his clergy to read it in their churches. With regard to his alleged action in obtaining the release of John Bunyan from Bedford Gaol, it appears that Bunyan having been a second time imprisoned in 1675, the bishop, who had the power of releasing a prisoner for nonconformity on a bond given by two persons that he would conform within a year, was applied to, to use this power in Bunyan's behalf. Barlow *more suo* expressed his

"particular kindness for Dr. Owen (in whose name he had been asked), and his desire to deny him nothing he could legally grant. He would even strain a point to serve him. But he had only just been made a bishop, and what was asked was a new thing to him. He desired a little time to consider of it; if he could do it, Owen might be assured of his readiness to oblige him." A second application at the end of a fortnight found Barlow's readiness much cooled. "He found he might do what was asked, but the times were critical, and he had many enemies. It would be safer for him not to take the initiative. Let them apply to the Lord Chancellor to make an order for Bunyan's release on the customary bond. Then he would do what Owen desired." Owen's biographer sums up this discreditable but characteristic passage in Barlow's life, "This last was done, and the poor man released. But little thanks to the bishop."

This imprisonment—short as it was—for it only lasted six months—becomes of considerable importance in the history of our religious literature, from the great probability that it was during this period that the book which has made Bunyan's name immortal, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, was now begun and partly completed.

One incident in Barlow's episcopal career deserves notice as being of some importance in itself, and as having been referred to in some of the late ecclesiastical suits—the case of the so-called Moulton "images." The case was briefly this—The parishioners of Moulton, near Spalding, had obtained a faculty

from the deputy chancellor to place the communion table under the east wall of the chancel and rail it in ; and at the same time to decorate the walls of the church with paintings of the apostles and other sacred emblems. These pictures displeased the puritanically-minded vicar, Mr. Tallents, at whose instigation the chancellor, Dr. Foster (Bunyan's bitter and persistent enemy—a "right Judas," as he calls him), annulled his deputy's faculty. Barlow, on being appealed to, took the side of the vicar against the pictures, and wrote an elaborate Breviate of the case, setting forth from his stores of ecclesiastical learning the illegality of such decorations. The parishioners, however, nothing daunted, appealed to the Court of Arches, and obtained from the dean, Sir Richard Lloyd, a judgment in their favour, the vicar and his abettors being condemned in costs. Of the ultimate issue of the case we are unhappily ignorant, for of those much-fought-over "images," more truly, "pictures," not the smallest vestige exists at present in Moulton church, nor is there, I believe, any record of the time and manner of their removal.¹ A long episcopate of such a man as Barlow, with no personal supervision, and little care for the state of the diocese, must have allowed all sorts of scandals to grow to a head. We possess the primary charge of the bishop who succeeded him, which certainly does not indicate a very happy state of things. But as we are here entering on a new period under the Revolution Settlement, we pass to another chapter.

¹ Canon Venables' sketch ends here.

CHAPTER XV

THE DIOCESE TAKEN VIGOROUSLY IN HAND

It is not probable that in the short episcopate of Bishop Tenison, 1692-5, much was done in the diocese to make up for the careless administration of Bishop Barlow. Tenison had been distinguished for liberality as Rector of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, in London, the proofs of which still remain. We may judge also from his after conduct as Archbishop of Canterbury and the sobriquet he gained of "Old Dock," that he would be ready to take a decided stand against any manifest evil. But in the three years of his incumbency he cannot have gained much knowledge of the six counties of his unwieldy diocese, and his energies were reserved for other and more conspicuous fields. He was succeeded by one who had had more opportunities of knowing the state of the clergy in the diocese, and the abuses needful to be set right.

Dr. James Gardiner had been sub-dean of the cathedral, and had become acquainted with the many scandals prevalent. We find one of his clergy, in a treatise written to combat some of the bishop's

views, saying, "We can never be enough thankful to his Majesty that he was pleased to honour us with a bishop taken from among ourselves to fill the chair of this ancient see of Lincoln, who is neither ignorant of our persons nor our needs, nor unwilling to hear and resolve our doubts."¹ Bishop Gardiner made his primary visitation in 1697, and by way of a preparation for it, he published a tract of "advice to his clergy," thinking that he could thus more usefully instruct them than by delivering a charge at the time of his Visitation, when he might be enfeebled by the labour of "seven or eight weeks' travelling," and by the necessary work to be done at a Visitation, such as Confirmations, and the consideration of Presentments. At the same time he strongly urged his clergy not to absent themselves from the Visitation, as their meeting might serve many useful ends. He laments the vastness of the diocese and the difficulty of performing his work effectually, and he greatly deplores his lacking the assistance of rural deans, an office which had been long disused in the diocese of Lincoln, though "it is yet exercised in some dioceses of this kingdom."²

"If the bishop of this extensive diocese was provided of active and faithful persons in the several deaneries, which retain the name yet, his business might be manageable, and his authority and government useful; whereas, for want of these, no bishop can do so much and so well as he might be willing

¹ *A Discourse of Licences to preach*, by Ja. Metford, Rector of Basingham, Lincoln.

² The office of rural dean was not revived in Lincoln diocese till the time of Bishop Kaye,

and glad to do." He laments "the unaccountable negligence of some and the immoralities of others," which give so much trouble to a bishop, and give occasion "to the world to believe that it was a false and groundless presumption which they made in taking Holy Orders, and a sort of lying against the Holy Ghost." He complains of some of the clergy "who read the Common Prayer very seldom, or not in order, or not the whole, but only some parts or pieces." He alludes not only to the Morning and Evening Prayer, but also to the administration of the sacraments, and the other offices. As to the baptism of infants, he cautions them against performing it in private houses, as if it was very much the custom. There was, it appears, "unaccountable neglect" in observing the Fasts and Feasts of the Church. Good Friday services had almost fallen into disuse. He insists strongly that all clergy, beneficed or non-beneficed, require, according to the canons, the bishop's licence to preach, and he notes an abuse very prevalent of licences being given by "illiterate, corrupt, or covetous surrogates, who may grant licences to unordained, unqualified, and insufficient men, and the bishop never know it. Many small livings are held only by sequestration; and if the serving the cure, together with the power of sequestering the profits, be granted at the pleasure of the surrogate, the bishop not knowing, unworthy men may easily get into curacies, and if they can but screen themselves at the times of visitation, they may continue undiscovered." He refers to the scandalous and profane neglect of some who pretend themselves to be

ministers of Christ, in the matter of the Lord's Supper. "These men seem to make their great endeavour to deter men from it rather than to encourage them to come." He would have the Holy Communion always celebrated in the chancel, "where the Communicants can receive with greater order, decency, and convenience for devotion, than in the body of the Church and the seats there. There is great inconvenience in consecrating in so strait a place as an ally of the church, and delivering the Bread and Wine in narrow seats, over the heads, and treading upon the feet of those who kneel, when by removing into the Chancel at the time of that solemnity, every one may kneel without disturbance, and receive with easiness, and see the whole office performed. This is so proper and so becoming that one cannot but wonder that the parishioners in any place should be averse to receive the Sacrament in this order, and that rectors as well Improprate as Propriate should not take more care to fit their Chancels for this purpose, but that some lie wholly disused in more nasty manner than any cottager of the parish would keep his own house. Others are employed for keeping school, by reason of which the seats, pavement and windows are commonly broken and defaced, not to mention other rudenesses and indecencies which are not fit to be permitted in a place set apart for God's worship."

He then examines the objection raised by some to this use of the chancels, viz. that it is popery. Having refuted this notion, which shows us how strong the old Puritan leaven still was, the bishop passes to catechizing and the preparation for Confirmation.

By Returns, of which we shall have to speak hereafter, it appears that this part of the priest's duty was generally satisfactorily performed. He presses strongly upon the clergy the need of full instruction of children with "more than ordinary pains" for Confirmation,¹ not only in the church but in their own houses.

Presently he falls upon a monster abuse in the performance by the clergy of clandestine marriages. "I am sorry," he says, "there are so many in this Church and some in this Diocese who abuse their trust in this matter. It is so presumptuous and so perfidious a practice that it cannot be censured too severely. Such an one as can be tempted by a little sum of money, or a great one, to marry any persons who resort to them without the publication of banns or licence duly obtained, or with licence at uncanonical hours, and in a clandestine manner, either in their own houses or in their churches are not fit to be entrusted with such a power. They do an illegal act, knowingly and wilfully, which those who have any sense of their character and trust and duty to their superiors would

¹ We have some details as to the performance of Confirmation by this bishop. In a Pamphlet published in 1697 by Mr. Offley, who had been chaplain to Bishop Barlow, he apologizes for Barlow's non-performance of Confirmation on account of his age and infirmities, and says—"His Lordship's wishes were that the Diocese of Lincoln might be blessed hereafter more duly with the solemn rite of Confirmation, and so it was my duty to attend whilst your Lordship performed the sacred office for many days together in your Cathedral Church at Lincoln and elsewhere within some peculiars belonging to that magnificent Church, particularly at Banbury, where nearly 1000 persons received Confirmation the 25th and 26th September—some eighty years of age, and scarce any under twelve, for which blessing that ancient Corporation owns itself for ever obliged unto your Lordship."—*Directions for the Choice of Books, Epistle Dedicatory.*

not do. Their greediness of profit hath debauched their consciences, and they have no feeling of their own wickedness, nor any regard to the many evil consequences that attend this practice."

Passing to other points of offences against morality, the bishop instances two by which great scandal is given, viz. *first*, Intemperance, of which he says—"The scandal is very great where the guilt is manifest, and the offenders cannot be too severely censured, yet, if they be but few, as I hope they are not many in comparison of the great body of the clergy, the whole ought not to be reproached for the misbehaviour of those few." *Secondly*, Covetousness. "Those that are really guilty in this matter are highly scandalous." The bishop then proceeds to give one instance of covetousness which, he says, "is very unworthy and disgraceful. This is the not allowing Curates a meet and competent maintenance agreeable to their education, character and the occasion of their expenses. What a vile and sordid thing it is for men of great Preferments to cheapen Curates and contract with them for £20 or £25 or £30 per annum (for they seldom exceed that proportion, calling it a *competency*), when, according to the value of their ecclesiastical incomes, they might make it double to that. Then they might be provided of more sufficient Curates than some of them are. This is a very scandalous practice and makes scandalous Curates."

Other points noted by the bishop are a too great easiness in signing testimonials; the giving false titles to candidates for Orders to enable them to get into Orders, and then leaving them to shift for themselves;

the suffering glebe houses and chancels to fall into dilapidation ; the neglect of paying tenths and procurations ; non-residence in benefices.

Upon the whole it cannot be said that Bishop Gardiner's address gives us a very bright or satisfactory picture of the state of the diocese, but rather indicates the existence of a crop of scandals such as we might naturally expect from the troubled times of the Rebellion and Restoration and the lax administration of the preceding bishops.

Doubtless, during the ten years of his incumbency, Bishop Gardiner, who was so fully conscious of the evils which were around him, did his best to remove or modify them, but there needed a stronger man, and one whom his previous reputation would enable to strike more fearlessly, in order to abate some of the great abuses then prevalent. Such an one was happily found in William Wake, Canon of Christ Church and Dean of Exeter, one of the most able and learned prelates that the Church of England has ever known.

Wake had long been engaged in the struggles of controversial divinity, and had achieved the highest reputation for his Replies to Bossuet. But his crowning success was in the complete answer which he had given to the accomplished Atterbury in the great Convocation controversy. His learned folio entitled *The State of the Church and Clergy in England in their Councils, Synods, Convocations, etc.*, published in 1703, had remained unanswered, as indeed in its main contents it was unanswerable. The appointment of so learned a man to the see of Lincoln (1705) might indeed have been a doubtful benefit to the diocese.

had he suffered his studies to absorb all his energies, as so many great scholars have done. But this was by no means the case. William Wake was as active and vigorous as an administrator as he was energetic as a controversial divine. We possess the fullest evidence of the minute care with which he, and the man of kindred mind who succeeded him, investigated every part of his diocese, and brought correction to bear everywhere.

Bishop Wake's first Charge at his primary visitation in 1706 was an earnest and eloquent appeal to his clergy to perform their sacred duties aright, but had no special features particularly touching the diocese. But in his second Charge published in 1709 we have a more distinct attack on special evils. There were some monster abuses which needed a strong man to assail, supported as they were by the most powerful in the land, defended by some of the judges, and acquiesced in by the corrupt trafficking and servile dependence of the clergy. So prevalent were simoniacal transactions of all sorts, the clergy buying presentations, or covenanting to receive only a small part of the income of a benefice, or to resign when called upon, that this "corruption was so commonly practised that in many cases it is hardly thought to be a fault at all." The bishop therefore in a Tract published instead of a Charge (1709), the matter being too long for an ordinary Charge, addresses himself solemnly to the clergy—

"Consider, I beseech you, how much you not only betray the rights of the Church, but expose your own selves by every corrupt bargain that you make, or

undue obligation that you enter into for the procuring of a presentation. Think upon that servitude to which you subject yourselves, and what a scandal you must hereby give to all good men. Your liberty, your interest, your conscience all require you so to do. The very dignity of your order depends upon it, if once a corrupt traffic prevails among us, so that the best benefices instead of being bestowed upon those who for piety and learning the best deserve them, shall be exposed to such as will give the most money for them, or submit to the most sordid and unjust compliances in order to the obtaining of them."

In his very learned and able treatise on Patronage, the bishop points out clearly the utter illegality of the control exercised by patrons over the clergy by means of Bonds of Resignations ; and though this abuse was not legally got rid of till towards the end of the century, there can be no doubt that Bishop Wake's powerful denunciation of it helped considerably towards this end. He exposed without shrinking "how many ways both the patrons and the clergy have heretofore found, to avoid if they could the name of Simony, and yet still to continue to commit the crime." Some of the Judges having upheld the legality of Bonds of Resignation, the bishop does not hesitate to examine these judgments, and to show clearly how utterly opposed they are to the spirit of any law which condemns Simony.

Probably there have been few more painstaking and exact bishops than Bishop Wake. In the Lincoln Registry there is to be found a large folio volume containing in beautifully small neat writing a complete

account of every parish in his huge diocese. Each page of this volume is divided into five columns. The first, headed "Benefice," has the name of the parish with the deanery and the name of the patron and the number of families in the parish. The second, headed "Incumbent," the name of the rector or vicar, with the date and place of his ordination and institution, whether resident or non-resident, the name of curate where any, the salary of curate. The third column, headed "Services," gives the amount of services on Sundays, festivals and week-days, the times when catechizing was used, the times when Holy Communion was celebrated. In the fourth column we have the value of the benefice as returned, its value in the king's books, the amount of tenths and procurations. The fifth column contains a notice of any charities which exist, and of schools. There are also notes as to the amount of Papist Recusants, Presbyterians, Quakers and Anabaptists, and a note of their chapels.

It is hardly possible to conceive a more full statistical account of the diocese than this, and the plan of it was evidently held to be an admirable one by Wake's successor, Edmund Gibson. For he has added in almost every instance notes of his own to bring down the statement to his own time. The writing is very similar, and probably both sets of entries were made by the same Registrar; but a slight difference in the colour of the ink may be observed. Bishop Gibson also caused Wake's volume to be interleaved, and in the new leaves has made entries as to the gentlemen's seats in each place, and other interesting matter. It would of course be im-

possible to transcribe in such a work as this, several thousand entries, though all are more or less of interest.¹ We must be content with gathering certain general views from the examination of them.

In the smaller parishes there was only one Sunday service; sometimes this was not given on every Sunday, but on alternate Sundays; occasionally less often; one entry returns two or three times a year, but this was evidently for some special reason. In the larger parishes there are generally two services on Sundays, and on Feasts, and very commonly Wednesday and Friday services. Catechizing was universal. Usually it was done in Lent, but sometimes also at other periods as well. Sometimes the return is "when any are sent," sometimes "none are sent," but with very rare exceptions, the practice seems to have prevailed in all the churches. The Vicar of Horncastle returns that he "preaches catechetically," also that sometimes he catechizes in the school. This vicar had built a new house; but there are numerous entries of the glebe house being in bad repair, the incumbent often residing in some other house in the parish.

The weakest point in the returns, is the number of times of the celebration of the Holy Communion. Almost all parishes are content with three or four times—four is the dominant number. Often after this is written "Saltem 3." Some of the larger parishes have "quolibet mense," but even in these the more usual number is six. There is no evidence of any

¹ In the report of the Archæological Society for Lincoln, Nottingham, etc. etc., the entries for the county of Leicester, occupying one hundred and forty pages, have been transcribed by Mr. Fletcher, F.S.A.

parish having weekly celebration. Often the number of returns made to Bishop Wake have decreased in the returns made to Bishop Gibson, so that we frequently find entries as follows—4 . . . 3 . . . 6 . . . 4. In all cases the little dots which follow an entry seem to lead to a later entry, somewhat different; or to some additional information.

From these exhaustive returns we learn the fact that the salaries of curates had not risen to a higher level than when Bishop Gardiner so severely censured the beneficed clergy for their "covetousness" in this respect. They still ranged about £20 or £30; sometimes rising as high as £40, sometimes descending to £10. These excessively low stipends necessitated the holding of several curacies by the same clerk, and in consequence but a scant allowance of services. It was a real misfortune for the diocese of Lincoln that a man so able as Bishop Wake, and withal so vigorous, energetic and methodical, should have been taken from it to fill the more important post of the Primacy. It would have been a still greater misfortune had Wake been followed by a successor of a different spirit from himself, and one disposed to neglect or underrate the measures taken by him for the supervision of the diocese. Happily this was not the case.

William Wake was succeeded (1716) by a man equally eminent with himself in learning and power, and equally devoted to a careful performance of disciplinary work. Edmund Gibson, first a distinguished Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, then a leading London clergyman, enjoying the close friendship of Archbishop Tenison as Rector of Lambeth and

Librarian of the archiepiscopal library, then Archdeacon of Surrey; and crowning a long list of learned works by his famous *Codex Juris Ecclesiastici Anglicani* (1713), which still continues the authoritative law book of the Church of England, was appointed to Lincoln on the translation of Wake.

Gibson was careful to keep up the useful plan of analyzing and tabulating the returns made by his clergy, which we have described above as introduced by Wake. In the *Speculum Dioceseos* originated by Wake, after the note of the original returns made to Wake there follow the notes of the returns made to Gibson, with the dates; which enable us to trace the history of a parish for some twenty years.¹ It seems that Bishop Gibson issued his inquiries every year. There are in the Library of St. Paul's volumes containing the Returns for 1717, 1718, 1720, 1721, and in the *Speculum Dioceseos* we have tabulated notes giving information under each of these dates.

Thus, to take an instance. "Ashby de la Zouch with the chapel of Brockfordby in the Deanery of Akeley contains over 300 Families, among which there are 10 Presbyterians. Patron, the Earl of Huntingdon. The Incumbent was in 1711 Mr. Anthony Johnson, who was resident, but query whether in the Vicarage House. His successor, John Smith, was instituted March 9, 1715. Mr. Smith was ordained Priest May 10, 1706, by John Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. Samuel Holbrooke succeeded. Instituted June 5, 1721. He

¹ The original returns from which these tables are made have fortunately been rescued by Dr. Sparrow Sympson of St. Paul's from imminent destruction as waste-paper, and placed in the library of St. Paul's.

resides, but not yet in the Vicarage House as the widow has not yet departed; at Brockfordby the schoolmaster of Repton in the county of Derby [resides or officiates?]. Services—two on Sundays. Every alternate Sunday one in the said chapel [of Brockfordby]. There are also services on Festivals and on Wednesdays and Fridays; also twice on Saturdays before Communion Sunday. Catechizing of children all the summer. [Later return.] Part of the summer [Later] in Lent. Holy Communion every month." To this are appended the particulars of the revenues of the living; the value in the king's books, the procurations and synodals also in the column for schools and charities, the information that the lecturer who formerly received £20 had been reduced to £10, the public school which formerly received £10 had been raised to £50, and there were some donations still due.

Gibson, like Wake, was too good a man to be left unnoticed in a diocese such as Lincoln. After four years of valuable work in the diocese he was translated to London, where his episcopate was altogether admirable. Gibson was succeeded by Richard Reynolds, a man in no way remarkable, who owed his preferment apparently to his having married a daughter of Richard Cumberland, Bishop of Peterborough (1723).

Reynolds had the year before been consecrated Bishop of Bangor in succession to the famous Hoadly, and it seems that the only literary work by which he is known is a sermon on the "Redistribution of Charity," in which he endeavours to prove that the

suppression of the monasteries was a valuable help to charitable institutions. There is a volume in the Lincoln Registry, without date, containing a table of the returns for the diocese (as is conjectured) for the year 1743.¹ If this is its right date it will represent the returns furnished to Bishop Reynolds, and, if so, it shows a considerable falling off from the times of Wake and Gibson.

In 1736 Bishop Reynolds, then about to make his fifth triennial Visitation; published a short address to the clergy and churchwardens to accompany his Visitation Articles. He says—"Intending this summer to make my fifth triennial Visitation of this diocese, which in my stage of life may reasonably be taken to be the last I can propose to make, I shall set myself more immediately and closely to the two main points, *i. e.* first to receive complaints and make redress of such disorders in or amongst the members of my diocese as are grown, or growing up to notoriety and scandal. And, secondly, to collect a full and true state of the churches, their edifices, and endowments for their effectual preservation from diminution and dilapidation; towards which I trust I shall have the ready assistance of the ministers and churchwardens, the parochial corporation and standing trustees for the patrimony of the church in their respective parishes, whose faith and honour are concerned from time to time, and especially before ordinary Visitations, carefully to survey and honestly to communicate to the Visitor such decays, neglects,

¹ It purports to be a return made by Dr. John Thomas, 1743. But Thomas did not succeed till 1744.

or injuries within their respective trusts as cannot be redressed by their parochial authority.- And forasmuch as the offences which come are observed to abound most in those places where the pastoral care is most deficient, either through the non-residence of the minister or his undertaking more churches than he can duly supply, or his temerarious entertainment of adventitious, unapproved, unqualified assistants, I must the more intently apply myself to extirpate these roots of disorder." This is dated Buckden, March 26, 1736, and we may take the tables of 1743 as representing the result of this and the other Visitations of this bishop.

At the same time that Bishop Reynolds was visiting episcopally, his son, Archdeacon George Reynolds, Archdeacon of Lincoln, was visiting archidiaconally.¹ The articles issued by both are very much the same, and the result, such as it was, may be due in part to each.

In looking through the tabular returns we are struck first of all by the state of the cathedral city of Lincoln. The parishes of St. Botolf, St. Michael, St. Peter Eastgate, St. Swithun, and St. Nicholas are returned as having *no church*. St. Benedict's has service once a month. St. Mark's on three festivals and four times besides. St. Margaret's has no service. St. Martin's four or five times in the year. St. Mary Magdalene every Sunday, in afternoon. St. Mary le Wigford every Sunday once. St. Paul's in the Bail

¹ The archdeacon was a distinguished divine and learned writer. He published an *Historical Essay* on the government of the Church of England in answer to Dodd, the Romanist historian.

afternoon service. St. Peter's at Arches daily service twice, an afternoon sermon on Sundays. St. Peter's at Gowts service once a month. In the whole city there was no sermon in the morning, and only one church where there was any service at all. The Holy Communion was administered in most cases three or four times in the year and on festivals. St. Mary le Wigford had a monthly celebration. It must be remembered that these churches were small, and that the cathedral was at hand to supply needs, but the returns represent an extraordinary state of things.¹

The return of which we are speaking does not exhibit any improvement in the diocese in the matter of frequency of Communion. The usual return is three or four times in the year, occasionally two, and sometimes six; a few monthly. Catechizing is still almost universally returned as taking place in Lent. Sometimes "as often as any are sent," sometimes "privately." An indolent incumbent returns, "But now and then." An energetic one, "Every day for a fortnight before and after the great festivals." There appear to be more "omissions" of catechizing than in the former tables. Several returns also give "uncertain." The uniform use of this valuable instruction is evidently beginning to be broken through.

¹ Lincoln formerly contained fifty-two churches exclusive of cathedral. In the second and third years of Edward VI. a local act was obtained for the union of parishes in the city of Lincoln, authorizing four persons, John B. of Lincoln, William Hutchinson, mayor, George Stamp, and John Foulser to rearrange and unite the parishes, and pull down the superfluous churches.—Allen's *Lincolnshire*, p. 182.

Bishop Reynolds was succeeded in 1744 by John Thomas, who seems to have owed his advancement to his facility in speaking German, and to having accompanied the king in his Hanover expeditions. As a bishop for the large diocese entrusted to him he was probably but of little use, but he is commended by his contemporaries as a good-tempered and amiable man, and was probably popular with those clergy who had access to him. Bishop Thomas was of low extraction, plain in person, and very deaf, yet he contrived to marry four wives. Gilbert Wakefield accuses him of having a bad habit of raising expectations of patronage, and then disappointing them. Other contemporaries testify to his weakness in never being able to refuse a request when made by some great lord or powerful person. The same is noted of his successor, John Green (1761), an elegant scholar, and a man who lived for society and the cultivation of his literary tastes, more, perhaps, than for the strict superintendence of his diocese.

It is probable that under these two bishops, Bishops Thomas and Green, the diocese, which had been vigorously taken in hand by Wake and Gibson, subsided considerably as regards non-residence, pluralities, and general neglect; and was in fact in urgent need, if the power of Christianity was to be preserved, of that stimulating and awakening impulse which now in a somewhat irregular fashion was developed in its midst. Not that either Bishop Thomas or Bishop Green utterly neglected their episcopal work, as Bishop Thomas Barlow appears to have done, contenting himself with a devout aspiration that Confirmation

might be better attended to by his successors than he was able himself to attend to it. Of Bishop Green's work in this respect a very full record remains in the Registry. This was in the year 1771. From May 29 to June 8 the bishop was in Leicestershire visiting and confirming. On June 9 he began his Confirmation tour in Lincolnshire at Grantham. His plan appears to have been to confirm the candidates from the town on the first day of his arrival, and the next day to hold a Visitation of the clergy of the neighbourhood, and to confirm the candidates brought by them. Thus at Grantham, on June 10, he confirmed 289; at Sleaford, on June 11, 138; at Boston, 240; at Spilsby, 940; at Horncastle, 162, and on the next day, 632. The bishop was at Louth on Sunday and confirmed 274. On Monday he held his Visitation, and confirmed no less than 1112 candidates. At Caistor, on the first day, 129; on the following, 668; at Gainsborough, 178; and for the city of Lincoln the number given is 49. For the districts round Lincoln the numbers are not specified. Thus in this Confirmation tour in Lincolnshire the numbers confirmed were considerably over 5000, which contrasts not unfavourably with the number of those confirmed now in biennial periods, in which, however, only half the county and the chief towns (taken every year) are to be reckoned. The labour involved in these Visitation and Confirmation tours must have been immense. What with the Charge, the listening to a long sermon from some selected divine, and the confirming sometimes over 1000 children, even if no address were made to them (as was probably

the case ordinarily), must have been very trying. It speaks badly for the rulers of the country whether in Church or State that no attempt was made for 300 years to reduce the unwieldy diocese of Lincoln to more manageable proportions.

When his laborious tour was completed Bishop Green would gladly escape to his seclusion at Buckden, and his literary coterie in London, and for the next three years the diocese would see but little of the light of his countenance.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PERIOD OF THE REVIVALISTS

FROM the middle of the eighteenth century till towards the end, the action of the Church in the diocese of Lincoln may be regarded as being at its lowest point of efficiency. In the times of Bishops Wake and Gibson the majority of the incumbents appear to have been resident in their benefices, or if double-beneficed, to have had a resident curate; but after the middle of the century the majority were non-resident. Stories are told of the squadrons of divines who might be seen issuing from the towns on their steeds on a Sunday morning, and dispersing to the various neighbouring villages. Many incumbents lived at a distance, and knew nothing whatever of their parishes, which were handed over to a miserably paid curate. It is said that one who was incumbent of a considerable town in Lincolnshire for fifty years never once entered his church save for the purpose of induction.

In a village church in the same county may be seen a monument to the memory of one who was for twenty-four years curate of the parish, but was also

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incumbent of no less than three benefices. The Reverend Anthony Furness, residing at Caistor, served so many churches in the neighbourhood that some of them could only be indulged with a service once a month. This, however, he was determined should not be neglected by the parishioners, and after service would mount his horse and ride round the parish, and if he found any truant youths, would not hesitate to inflict on them a severe horse-whipping. In many cases, indeed, weekly services were absolutely impossible, and pastoral superintendence was quite out of the question.

The bishop who succeeded Bishop Green (1779) was a notorious pluralist, being the brother of the Lord Chancellor, and having the pick of Church preferments at his choice; and even after succeeding to the see of Lincoln he held the deanery of St. Paul's in plurality. There was then no law to enforce residence or prevent pluralities, and the bishop's admonitions would hardly carry much weight, supposing them to have been given. But it is probable that they were not given, but that things were allowed to take their course as they might, for Bishop Thurlow was an easy-going man, and not disposed to take a strong line against even prominent abuses, as may be inferred from his being a guest at his brother's house when he was living in open adultery. It was during the melancholy state of things prevailing about the middle of the century, that the awakening voices of the two Wesleys, sons of a Lincolnshire incumbent, began to make themselves heard, and though these Revivalists were attracted rather to great centres of

population—to London and Bristol—than to their own diocese, nevertheless their influence was quickly felt in Lincolnshire and in other parts of the diocese.

John Wesley, standing upon his father's tomb at Epworth, and advocating with intense energy the great doctrines of the Gospel, was a pathetic figure, appealing, and not in vain, to the hearts of the men of Lincolnshire, and his influence quickly spread. The supply of clergy was very deficient. In a sermon preached about the middle of the century at the Visitation at Horncastle, the preacher speaks in laudatory tones of the abundant supply of clergy, numbering, he supposes, fully four hundred—no great provision for some six hundred parishes.

The beneficed clergy seemed to be able to absent themselves from their benefices just as they pleased. A story is told of an incumbent who held his benefice under a bond of resignation—that abuse against which Bishop Wake had taken so vigorous a stand. This incumbent, to avoid being sued under the bond, resided in France, and so little was known about him that for several years after his death his widow continued to receive the proceeds of the benefice. In fact, it was a time of surrender of all discipline, and of so scanty a provision of instruction that Mr. Wesley's lay preachers must have been cordially welcomed, while the zeal they stirred up was carefully fostered by a clever system of classes and societies, which served to give stability to the impulses to embrace a higher spiritual life. No doubt great eccentricities and irregularities were developed, and it is not to be wondered at that the Methodists were not

generally welcomed by the clergy, though as yet, under their founder's orders, there was no thought of separating from the Church. The clergy were strongly opposed to what was designated as "enthusiasm," and even a very small amount of religious excitement was liable to affect them with alarm. Mr. Wesley's teaching had many vigorous literary opponents, but none spoke with greater weight and power on the subjects most prominent in his teaching than a divine of whom Lincolnshire may well be proud. Daniel Waterland, born at Walesby, a little village at the foot of the Lincolnshire wolds, and educated at the Lincoln Grammar School, found a place among his numerous controversial writings, which did such vast good to the Church of his day, to write solidly and clearly on the subjects of Regeneration and Justification, and to correct the errors of the teaching of the Methodists.

Canon Overton (*Life of Wesley*) is of opinion that Mr. Wesley was generally well received in Lincolnshire, but there were riots at Grimsby, and in the city of Lincoln he could not obtain leave to preach in any church. But soon "preaching-houses" or chapels began to arise in the villages, and Mr. Wesley's system assumed a certain solidity and coherence from which it has never since been dislodged. In 1787 Bishop Thurlow was succeeded in the diocese by a much more able and vigorous man, George Pretyman, better known as Tomline, who had carried off the highest honours at Cambridge, had been the tutor, and continued to be the fast friend and secretary of the great minister, William Pitt. There was therefore an easy road for him to the highest promotion in the

Church, and on Thurlow's death he became Bishop of Lincoln and Dean of St. Paul's. He held the see for more than thirty-two years before moving to Winchester, and his administration of it was vigorous and careful. He made a general Visitation of his diocese eleven times, and, as episcopal work was then conceived, may be regarded as almost a model bishop. He thus obtains a high eulogium from the party of earnest clergy who met towards the end of the century to consider the state of religion in the diocese, and draw up a report, which is given below.

It must have been as a practical governor more than as a theologian, that Bishop Tomline was acceptable to the "serious" or evangelical clergy, as his published *Refutation of Calvinism* denounces their tenets in no measured terms; and as to the Methodists, the strong line which he took against them may be inferred from the letter addressed to him by John Wesley shortly before his death. The account of the Conference of clergy mentioned above, which was held just at the end of the century in some district in the diocese of Lincoln (not specified), is most interesting. At a general meeting on August 29, 1799, convened with permission of George, Bishop of Lincoln, written reports were received from upwards of one hundred parishes in the district, and a committee was appointed to draw up a report grounded on information contained in the said returns, and to exhibit the same at an adjourned meeting, to be held September 17.

"*Facts.*—The general and alarming neglect of religious instruction and worship which have given rise to the present inquiry appears but too evidently

by the statement of the clergy. In seventy-nine of these parishes returns have been made of proportion the numbers present at public worship and the Lord's Supper bear to population.

Results.—Inhabitants, 15,042 ; average congregations, 4,933 ; communicants, 1,808. Sick persons seldom require spiritual assistance of their minister, and scarcely ever before the last extremity. Parents and masters are very remiss in enforcing attendance of children and servants at divine worship and catechetical instruction. Though there are several schools, and though many Sunday schools have been set on foot by the endeavours of clergy, a great proportion of them at the sole expense of ministers, and some taught by themselves, yet it is often with no small difficulty that the children are prevailed on to attend and the parents to send them. There is almost a total disuse of family prayers, and of reading of Holy Scripture.

Causes.—Circulation of profane writings ; but of late this much discountenanced and diminished. Irregular management of ale-houses, many kept open on Sundays and during time of divine service. Moving of cattle and sheep from pasture to pasture to avoid interruptions of week or other days ; wakes, feasts, and dancings, which in many parishes begin on Lord's Day, on which also some fairs or annual markets are held or continued, cock-fightings and petty races. Slackness of churchwardens in their own attendance on public worship, and in doing what their office requires to enforce attendance of others, particularly of their making no presentments of

persons who never attend any place of worship, or lead notoriously scandalous lives. Number of rich dissenters small and by no means increasing, chiefly Baptists, Independents, and a few Quakers. They behave in general with great decency, and manifest no asperity towards the clergy or other members of the Establishment. Only seven meeting-houses of Baptists and Independents, one of Quakers. Those of persons called Methodists, and not generally professing dissent from the Church of England, are thirty-eight, only twenty-two of which are wholly appropriated to religious purposes, the rest barns, out-houses or dwelling-houses, many of them not registered.

“The Methodists are threefold—(1) Those who profess to be members of the Church of England, and especially attend Church service and partake of the Sacrament, but have places set apart for additional exercise of devotions at such hours as do not interfere with Church service. (2) Such as rarely if ever attend Church service, and are regardless of the hours in the appointment of their separate time of meeting, and have also of late taken upon themselves to administer and receive the Holy Sacrament at such meetings. (3) Those who attend and encourage a wandering tribe of fanatical teachers, mostly taken from the lowest and most illiterate classes of society, among whom are to be found raving enthusiasts, pretending to divine impulses of various and extraordinary kinds, practising exorcisms and many other sorts of impostures and delusions, and obtaining thereby an unlimited sway over the minds of the ignorant multitude.

“Of class (1) we have no complaint to make. They

are not enemies of ecclesiastical establishments ; they are frequently useful and zealous auxiliaries in reclaiming many habitual sinners. Class (2) contains many of pure intentions and pious dispositions, but uncommissioned ignorant substitutes of that regular ministry which Christ and His Apostles established in the Church. They abuse the clergy, propagate Antinomian and Predestinarian doctrines. (3) The third sect to whom the name of Methodists is usually given have no principle of union except to calumniate clergy and revile Establishments. Misrepresentations and impositions chiefly supported by *classed meetings*. Frailties, omissions, and imperfections of best of us have contributed in no inconsiderable degree to lessen the utility of our Establishment, and though we reap some consolation from the evidence which has been given of the zeal and industry of clergy in general, which have been awakened and increased by the dangers which threaten Christianity, they are yet by no means adequate to the necessity which called them forth. But we have just cause to complain of abuse of persons who pretend to a more than common zeal for religion, and enter parishes where the greatest harmony prevailed. Such treacherous intrusion calls for the serious attention of the Legislature.

“*Remedies.* (1) Resolve for ourselves to use redoubled endeavours, and will issue forms of Family Worship by S.P.C.K. ; will set example of moderation in the indulgence of worldly pursuits and amusements, however lawful and innocent in themselves ; will use all diligence in catechizing youth, and instructing the ignorant ; will studiously avoid all appearance of un-

becoming levity in dress and common discourse ; will neither hurry in performing services, nor omit any of the prescribed forms of our Church, nor have any irregularity or unseasonableness in the times of celebrating Divine Service. (2) Continuation, and, if need be, increase of vigilance of our worthy magistrates in execution of laws concerning ale-houses, gaming, profanation of the Lord's Day, etc. (3) Entire abolition, by proper and sufficient authority, of all Sunday feasts, wakes, dancings, fairs, and markets on the Lord's Day, and of petty races, and cock-fightings at all times. (4) Such explanations and amendments of Toleration Act, as, without infringing in any degree on any of the privileges, immunities and exemptions which dissenters from the Church of England now enjoy, shall secure the Church from fraudulent intrusion or encroachment. (5) A grant to members of the Church of England of opportunity of holding meetings for purposes of devotion, in addition to Church Service. (6) Some systematic plan not only for the more regular instruction of infant poor in their religious duties, but also for training them up in such early habits of industry and subordination as under blessings of God's Providence would stop the contagion of that licentiousness which has produced all the miseries of atheism and anarchy in a neighbouring country, and has only been prevented by the special mercy of the Almighty from injuring our happy constitution in Church and State.

“ We offer our thanks to the bishop for encouraging our undertaking, and for the paternal solicitude with

which he watches over and promotes spiritual and temporal welfare of his clergy and the general advancement of Christianity, and particularly for the treasures of learning and orthodox interpretation which he hath lately opened to us in his valuable treatise on Holy Scripture, and the Articles of our National Church." ¹

This report does credit to the zeal and earnestness of a large body of the clergy of the diocese, and is also a valuable testimony to the work of Bishop Tomline, and to the estimation in which he was held by some of the better sort of his clergy. The revival of religious earnestness among the clergy towards the end of the century, is very marked in many ways. A notable instance of it may be found in the diocese of Lincoln in 1795, when at Rauceby, a small village in Lincolnshire, of which the rector was Mr. Pugh, met a party of fourteen "evangelical" clergymen to decide upon the application of a sum of £4000 left by Mr. Jane for furthering "the interests of true religion."

The application of the money which found most favour with the meeting was to use it for missionary purposes, and this after some years of incubation was, in fact, the germ of the Church Missionary Society. It is hardly to be supposed that these zealous men were in accordance with Bishop Tomline's theology, which was so strongly anti-Calvinistic; but they may have rejoiced in having a bishop who was not a nonentity, or a mere courtier, but a theologian, and one who could appreciate literary merit. In 1794

¹ From the Report in B. M.

appeared Dr. Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*, and the next year Bishop Tomline brought the author into his diocese by the gift of the sub-deanery of the cathedral. From henceforth Dr. Paley resided principally at Lincoln, moving in the summers to his living of Bishop Wearmouth, and some of his learned works were written at the sub-deanery. The bishop and the sub-dean were men of kindred minds, though Paley had more of the liberal element in his views. Bishop Tomline was strongly opposed to Roman Catholic emancipation, but he was a hearty supporter of the S.P.G., and one of the early promoters of the National Society. On the whole the diocese may be held to have suffered a considerable loss when in 1820 he was promoted to the see of Winchester. This loss was all the more felt as the bishop who succeeded him was by no means a man of active and business habits. Indeed it is difficult to say what qualifications for the episcopate were possessed by Dr. George Pelham. He must have owed his promotion to his high family connections, and not to his theological attainments. Dr. Pelham, from the time of his taking orders, had accumulated one preferment after another, until in 1802 he found himself Bishop of Bristol. Not content with so small a see, we find him in 1805 writing to Mr. Pitt, asking for the see of Norwich, and receiving rather a curt refusal. It was not till fifteen years afterwards that he was moved from the comparative obscurity of Bristol to the huge see of Lincoln.

It is to be feared that under Bishop Pelham, non-

residence and pluralities, which had long been the great evil of the diocese, came to a head. The bishop himself had been a notorious pluralist, and as to residence it is probable that he was not very strict in enforcing it. In 1827 a man of very different calibre and habits was happily called to the chief place in the diocese.

CHAPTER XVII

THE MODERN DIOCESE

It was a great happiness for the diocese of Lincoln that one so highly distinguished by academical honours and so admirably suited by character and temper for arduous work, as was Dr. John Kaye, Bishop of Bristol, should have been called to succeed Dr. Pelham (1827). In his first Charge delivered in 1828, Dr. Kaye shows that he clearly apprehended the heaviness of the work given him to do.

He had, he says, "laboured with all diligence to inform himself concerning the real state of the diocese," and he found much needing amendment. "It cannot be dissembled," he says, "that there is ample room for improvement—that there are deficiencies to be supplied—that there are abuses to be reformed." Founding himself on the "Consolidated Act" passed in 1817 for the abatement of some of the evils of non-residence and pluralities, he proceeds to make some striking remarks upon the manifest anomaly of non-residence, at the same time that he shows that this is in a great measure due to the poverty of many benefices. This poverty has obliged the Legislature

to allow the officiating by a curate at more benefices than one, sometimes in extreme cases has sanctioned his being licensed to three. Against taking advantage of this latter permission, the bishop strongly protests. "Nothing," he says, "but absolute necessity, nothing but the certainty that otherwise a parish will be left without Divine Service, will ever induce me to consent to it." Another cause of non-residence is in some cases the absolute want of a parsonage-house, in others its total unfitness for the abode of a clergyman. Nevertheless the bishop distinctly declares that he shall enforce the clause of the Consolidation Act, which enacts that the curate shall reside in the parish when the value of the benefice amounts to £300 per annum, and the population to 300, and when the population amounts to 1000 souls, whatever may be the value of the benefice. When, as he found to be the case in many instances, the parsonage-house has been assigned to the tenant of the glebe, the bishop will take effectual steps to have it transferred to the curate. He concludes this part of his Charge by dwelling on the fact that non-residence cannot excuse the incumbent from responsibility for the cure of the parish. In the case of curates serving two parishes, there is an excuse for providing only one service on the Lord's Day; but in many cases only one service is given when the clergyman has no other cure. This negligence must be remedied. The bishop dwells on the duty of catechizing, and recommends the expounding of Scripture rather than preaching from a single text. He then passes to the fact that the answers to his queries have shown him that in many cases the

curates are not licensed. This he justly infers to be often due to the desire of incumbents to have the power of summary dismissal of curates; but he declares that he will not permit this if the curate is performing his duties properly, and he calls upon all curates to take out licences. As to the stipends of curates, the law allows to incumbents instituted before 1813 some licence, but for those instituted after that date the stipend of curates is fixed by the law, and this will be enforced, except some special circumstances should arise. The fabric of the churches he leaves to the care of the archdeacons, and he concludes his Charge with wise, practical observations, and a declaration of his satisfaction at the removal of the Sacramental Test from the Corporation and Test Acts.

The diocese soon discovered that the bishop's words were not merely words of course, but were intended to be enforced, and a beginning was made of getting rid of the evils of non-residence, and in the building and repairing of parsonage-houses. The times were critical, almost revolutionary in the opinion of many, when the Reform Bill, Roman Catholic Emancipation, and the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts followed one another in quick succession, together with the attack upon the Irish Church, upon Church Rates, and the appointment (1831) of a commission "to inquire into the revenues and patronage of the Established Church." Under these circumstances the bishop's Charge, delivered in 1831, is of a somewhat despondent tone, but the greater part of it is devoted to weighty remarks

and cautions to those seeking an entrance into the ministry.

The Charge of 1834 was occupied with the consideration of the alleged grievances of dissenters. The bishop shared with his brethren a timidity as to the proposed revival of Convocation which facts have not justified. He is not able as yet to give a very flourishing account of the condition of his diocese. If, as some desired, pluralities were altogether done away with, he thinks that the effects would be disastrous. "In the diocese of Lincoln there are two hundred and six benefices, each in value below £100 per annum. The probable effect would be that one-half at least of those benefices would be left without a minister. On most of them there is either no parsonage-house, or a house of so mean a description as to be inhabited by a labourer. The incumbent, therefore, out of an income below £100 a year, would have not only to maintain himself and his family, but also to pay the rent of a house. Is this, I would ask, possible?" The only plan would be to raise the value of these benefices. But how? If other benefices were taxed for the purpose mischievous results would ensue. "In the diocese of Lincoln the incomes of two-thirds of the parochial benefices are between £100 and £500 a year. On some of these benefices it is impossible, and on all it would in my opinion be oppressive, to lay a tax." The bishop then turns to the cathedral establishments, which were at that moment being narrowly scanned by many, inquiring whether a part of their revenues, apparently producing but small results, might not be made available for poor parishes.

He is opposed to any alienation of their funds. He speaks modestly of some measures taken by himself to augment poor benefices.

Before the bishop delivered his Charge of 1837 a great change had come over the diocese of Lincoln. The Ecclesiastical Commission, renewed several times, and of which the bishop was himself a member in 1836, made in that year four reports recommending the establishment of a permanent body of Commissioners, who should have the power to lay before the queen in council schemes for the readjustment of dioceses, etc. An Act empowering them to do this having been carried in Parliament, the Commissioners presented a scheme severing the counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Leicester, Huntingdon and Hertford from the see of Lincoln, and annexing to it the county of Notts from the arch-diocese of York. Bedford and Huntingdon were to go to Ely; Buckingham to Oxford, Leicester to Peterborough, Hertford to London and Rochester.¹ The see was thus reduced more than one-half, and the bishop must have greatly rejoiced at the immense relief. But in the Charge of 1837 there does not appear to be any allusion to it. The bishop is almost completely occupied with discussing Tithes and Church Rates.

Arrangements were now made for providing the bishop a residence near to his cathedral city; Buckden, which had been for many centuries the chief residence of the Bishops of Lincoln, being no longer within the diocese. A temporary residence was found at Willingham, and the handsome house at Rischolme,

¹ This was not done till 1845.

about two miles from Lincoln, was purchased by the Commissioners.

In his Charge of 1840 the bishop has still to lament the existence of pluralities, attributable, as he points out, in many cases to the want of a house. The Pluralities Act having given the bishop certain powers of enforcing the erection of a parsonage-house, Bishop Kaye declares his intention of enforcing this. He also will enforce two services on the Lord's day, wherever this is possible. Union of benefices under certain circumstances he considers may be desirable.

In the Charge of 1846 the bishop is able to say with thankfulness that his directions as to two full services on Sunday have been generally observed. In 1849 he says—"Pluralities and non-residence do exist to a considerable extent, but it is certain that since the passing of the Pluralities Act they have been continually decreasing. . . . There are in this county (Lincoln) more than one hundred benefices of which the income is less, in some instances much less, than £100 a year. On most of them there is no house, in some no site on which to build one. Still a great addition has in the course of the last few years been made to the number of parsonage-houses, and consequently to the number of resident clergy."

In his final Charge, delivered in 1852, the bishop, speaking in pathetic tones of the many clergy who have passed away since his episcopate commenced, says—"Those who can compare the state of the Church as it was at that period with the present state, will, I am confident, bear testimony to the truth of the assertion that the state of the diocese has been

ameliorated; that the number of resident clergy has been greatly increased; that many parishes then destitute of a parsonage-house, and consequently of a resident clergyman, now possess both; that numerous schools for the religious education of the poor have been established; that the number of services performed in the churches has been increased; that a better feeling exists with reference to the maintenance and decent decorations of the fabric; that all the offices of religion are performed with greater regularity and solemnity, and in stricter conformity to the directions of the Church; and above all, that the clergy themselves are animated by a higher and holier spirit, by a deeper sense of the responsibility of their sacred calling, by a more steadfast determination to devote themselves unreservedly to their Master's service. . . . No curate now permanently serves three churches. Many still serve two, but the number will gradually decrease with the decrease of pluralities."

The bishop then takes a touching farewell of his clergy, as though prescient that his work was drawing to a close, and, in fact, soon after the delivery of this Charge, his wise, gentle, and fruitful administration of the diocese ceased. It is not too much to say of Bishop Kaye, that he raised the diocese from a lax, negligent, and undisciplined state into a more active, vigorous, and efficient condition. He was succeeded by one who was in every way qualified and disposed to carry on his work.

Dr. John Jackson, Rector of St. James's, and Canon of Bristol, was happily selected for the important post, and in October 1853 delivered his first Charge. He

fully endorsed Bishop Kaye's requirements as to residence and a second service ; but he also touched on another important matter, on which his predecessor had not laid so much stress. "The practice of celebrating the Holy Communion but four, five, or six times a year, which prevails so extensively in this diocese, appears to me to be inadequate to the intentions of the Church, insufficient for the spiritual well-being of our people, and calculated to encourage rather than correct the erroneous notions respecting the nature and obligations of the Sacraments which are taught by most who dissent from us, and held by many who profess to belong to our communion."

The "erroneous notions" alluded to are admirably stated by the bishop. "With us this sacrament is a means of grace for the weak. With them it is a privilege only for the perfect ; while we would offer it as an aid to the contest, they would reserve it as a reward of the victory ; while we regard it as the right and duty of the called, they would limit it to those whom they venture to pronounce chosen." He shows that the unfrequent celebration tends to foster this false view, and to destroy the notion of the Holy Communion being a means of grace. In the administration of Infant Baptism privately without sufficient cause, and the use of the shortened form even in church, thus dispensing with god-parents, the bishop finds prevalent abuses calling for strong censure. He finds also the diocese "low down in the scale of national education," and strongly advocates the establishment of more Church schools.

In his second Charge he is able to note an improve-

ment in the number of services. There were, he says, 273 parishes, being more than one-third of the parishes in the diocese, in which one Sunday service only was given. These were now reduced to 188, but still there were seventeen churches in which the single service was not excused by plurality, but proceeded apparently from indolence. Many new churches had been built, the number of children in Church schools had increased, but still no progress had been made in the frequency of the celebration of the Holy Communion. But in 1864 the bishop is able to report some progress. The number of churches with celebrations only four times a year has diminished from 328 to 233.

The contributions for charitable and missionary purposes had, however, shown a decrease, and the bishop speaks with sorrowful seriousness on this matter. In 1867 the bishop is able to "observe with much thankfulness the growing frequency of the administration of the Holy Communion."

The 328 cases mentioned above have now dwindled to 183. Monthly communions have risen to 384; 34 churches have fortnightly, 20 weekly, celebrations. This great work was slowly making its way, and Bishop Jackson's successor could contemplate a much more satisfactory state of things.¹ It may be said that as it was Bishop Kaye's special work to abate the

¹ In 1895 Bishop King says in his charge—"The Holy Communion is celebrated weekly in 222 parishes; fortnightly in 134; monthly in 213. To this should be added the increased number of celebrations on Easter Day, and in several parishes on Saints' days and other holy days in the week; and that in some parishes the Holy Communion is celebrated every day."

evils of non-residence and pluralities, so it was Bishop Jackson's special work to diminish the crying scandal of withholding from the people the special and divinely-appointed means of grace.

On Dr. Jackson's translation to London, the diocese welcomed with acclamation the appointment of so distinguished a divine as Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, Archdeacon of Westminster, whose extensive learning, devotion to good works, unwearied assiduity, and amiable and attractive character, were of the highest value to it. It would be impossible to represent in a short space the varied labours, ecclesiastical, social, and literary, which Bishop Wordsworth bestowed upon his diocese; but as Bishop Kaye has been specially noted as the abater of non-residence, and Bishop Jackson for encouraging more frequent celebrations of the Holy Communion, so Bishop Wordsworth's *special* work may perhaps be fixed on as the revival of the office of bishop suffragan, and ultimately the severance of the county of Notts from the see of Lincoln. To one so strongly impressed as was Bishop Wordsworth with the necessity of vigorous episcopal work, the union of the two large counties of Nottingham and Lincoln in one see seemed to be a manifest obstacle to all progress, which must be overcome at all hazards. In the very first year of his episcopate he presented a petition to the Crown, "that he might have the assistance of a bishop suffragan according to the ancient use of this realm before and after the Reformation."

The petition was granted, the Act of Parliament of Henry VIII. never having been repealed, and in

accordance with the provisions of this Act, Bishop Wordsworth presented two names to the Crown. The Reverend Henry Mackenzie, Archdeacon of Notts, was selected, and on Feb. 2, 1870, was consecrated at St. Mary's, Nottingham. A special interest was given to the service by the presence of the Greek Bishop Alexander Lycurgus. Dr. Mackenzie was an efficient helper in the diocese, as was also his successor, Dr. Trollope, but the plan of suffragan bishops did not satisfy Bishop Wordsworth's aspirations after more efficient episcopal superintendence, and he never ceased to labour for the subdivision of the diocese. An influential body of English Churchmen had been long working to obtain an Act of Parliament to authorize the foundation of several new sees, among others for one for the county of Notts and part of Derbyshire.

In 1868 Sir R. Cross carried through Parliament a bill which provided that when an income of £3000 a year and a residence was provided, bishops might be consecrated for the sees of Liverpool, Newcastle, Southwell, and Wakefield. Southwell was chosen for the seat of the Notts bishopric rather than Nottingham, on account of its magnificent collegiate church, and its old ecclesiastical associations. It was no easy matter to raise the large sum of money required for producing £3000 a year, but Bishop Wordsworth set himself energetically to work, aiding the subscription himself with profuse liberality. It would hardly, however, have been successful within a reasonable period, had not the diocese been startled by an announcement that unless the amount was raised at once the bishop would resign his see. This, as was

universally regarded, would be a grievous calamity to the Church and the diocese, and money began to flow in apace, so that on St. Philip and St. James's Day, 1884, the bishop had the satisfaction of taking part in the consecration of the first Bishop of Southwell, and handing over to him the care of the county of Notts. Not very long after this ceremony the bishop did actually resign, and his death followed shortly afterwards.

The work which Bishop Wordsworth did in the diocese of Lincoln would require a considerable volume to detail it, and has been well told in his Biography, though much is even there omitted. There was nothing which he did not touch, nothing which he did not help and benefit by his earnestness, attractiveness, and ever-ready liberality. He was the founder of a valuable theological school for training candidates for Holy Orders. He inaugurated diocesan synods and diocesan conferences. He helped to found a mission college, to establish an association for augmenting poor benefices. His sermons, speeches, and addresses, always full of most interesting topics which he seemed to draw from the inexhaustible well of his vast and varied learning, and always pervaded by a wonderful spirituality, had the greatest influence on all whom they reached. The respect and love with which he was universally regarded in the diocese may be inferred from the presence in the cathedral on the day of his funeral (which chanced to fall on the most attractive day of the Lincoln races) of a crowd numbering several thousands, all attired in black, and all testifying, by their demeanour, a deep and devout

impression of sorrow. One of the greatest comforts which Bishop Wordsworth had in his last days was the knowledge of who was to be his successor, and the opportunity which was afforded him of having an affectionate interview with him, and giving him his blessing, secure that the work which he had so much loved would not suffer in his hands.

The characters of some of the bishops which have been passed in review in this little work leave a good deal to desire, but it cannot be denied that the diocese has been singularly fortunate in modern days, and after the able and kind guidance which it has long received it ought not to fear comparison with any other diocese in England. This is not the place to institute any sort of comparison, but it may be noted that the diocese of Lincoln has some special difficulties to contend with. One of these is the extreme smallness of some of the parishes, in most of which the income for the clergyman is also very small. This acts as a complete bar to all hearty parochial work, to good schools, and useful institutions; it dwarfs and weakens the energies of the pastor by keeping before his mind the comparative waste of his power and life, and certainly has the danger of producing torpidity or carelessness. Another difficulty is the prevalence of a form of dissent, which, while not taking a direct stand against the Church, nevertheless weakens and cripples it by constantly representing it as devoid of life and energy.

A great advance in overcoming this latter obstacle is now being made by the Church. In the rural

districts dissent is languishing, and the younger generation show a decidedly increased tendency towards Churchmanship. The work, however, must be slow, and we have to pay a heavy price for the neglect and carelessness of the eighteenth century, for which evil the admirable devotion of the bishops and clergy of to-day can hardly compensate.

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